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WE GO ON FOR EVER

The sun of peace and light has set in the West plunging more than half the world in a lurid sea of gory chaos. The shadows of the dark night are falling fast and long on this land of ours, also and the calm twilight may ere long merge into the much dreaded night of death and destruction. We shall, before the night is fully upon us, join to perform, quite in the Indian fashion, the sandhya and invoke the Sovereign Arbiter to vouchsafe unto us courage and strength to face any emergency.

Man today is turning out to be the most menacing phenomenon. At no time perhaps has he planned and carried out with such scientific precision and baneful thoroughness the massacre of his brothers and the demoli-

tion of the temples of his own achievements. What impels him in this strange, inhuman conduct is a question that must take us far into a fruitful enquiry of the dangerous metaphysic that propels him in this action. Evidently man has taken a crudely partial view of himself and the world and has failed to reckon with the divine spark within, the core of his being in evolving this metaphysic for himself. It shall be our endeavour here to go into the springs of this bad metaphysic that has spelt so much ruin to man, and pit it against a good metaphysic, a really uplifting and reassuring metaphysic of life that would like a loving Mother in a bequeathing mood invest us with her sovereign qualities of robust courage, optimism and equa-

nimity. Only such legacies can sustain us today, when we see the red tide rising about us in all its mad fury and when tragedy has become the rule of the day. Only a philosophy which places man, his true being above the reach of tragedy and dissolution, which affirms death and destruction as only provisional and partial and never final, can afford us the necessary elevating counsel. Such philosophy is to be found in the transformed conduct and spiritual realizations of our ancient seers. Wisely have they warned us against exaggerating the physical phenomenon of death into a total extinction. For that would be to yield to an extremely materialistic view of life and to lose ourselves in despair. They have warned us against partial views of man and nature as such views burden us with the fear and worries of finite responsibility. They have counselled us to take refuge in that which is *full*, in that which is *great*. For the great alone is bliss. In the Absolute we can lie back with comfort, throwing our fears and cares of finite responsibility to the winds and *be ourselves*. The thought that man has been in the past at his best when he attempted to capture something of this fulness, the

fulness of the spirit, and tried to measure up to his full significance in this world, breeds in us the benedictions of a spiritualistic faith. And while spiritualistic faith makes us uncrowned kings in a world of promise, materialism's sun sets in a sea of disappointment and frustration. The sad commentary that the present state of the world offers to the truth of this statement points to the promising solution India can give to the world's problems.

Man saw for ages that all is passing in this mad, monstrous world, that all is struggling to snatch, at any cost, a few brief moments of life before Death's inexorable decree, that no intensity of thought and feeling, not even the saintly holiness radiating *ahimsa*, can preserve life and things against the onslaughts of violence and barbarism. How in such an alien and inhuman world, can so powerless a creature as man preserve his aspirations untarnished? The answer to this question is very momentous and affects profoundly our whole philosophy of life. To see the world as inhuman, malevolent is to be malevolent oneself and release forces of malevolence and violence. But to see the world as benevolent is to see unity and purpose behind it.

God intended harmony to come out of chaos by human effort ; and they serve themselves and their Maker best who see the world as benevolent and try to transfer a little of its latent harmony into themselves. But today values have turned topsy-turvy and man sees not as he ought to. Man is in a fighting mood and is out to wrest from nature her gifts. These he wants to be his aids in his mad conquest of power and pelf. He has thrown to the winds his old gods who are not helpful to him in this behalf, replacing them 'by new ones, the machine and the militarist state, the modern representatives of mammon and moloch. Bertrand Russel pertinently remarks, 'The worship of Force' to which Carlyle and Nietzsche and the creed of militarism have accustomed us, is the result of failure to maintain our own ideals against a hostile universe : it is itself a prostrate submission to evil, a sacrifice of our best to Moloch.' Nietzsche was the philosopher of power and his ideal was the strong, ruthless man who unscrupulously crushed his rival. It is important to remember in this connection that it is this Nietzschean creed, by incorporating itself in the German philosophical tradition, has amongst other factors, largely and effec-

tively contributed towards making the German political philosophy what it is today. The conclusion is naturally borne upon us that it is the hostile attitude to nature that has given rise to this philosophy of force.

The Nazi philosophy is the joint product of the two intellectual forces, the so-called 'idealist theory of the state' and the type of ethics represented by Nietzsche. The idealistic theory of the state personifies the state as a super-being, super-human in size and energy, but completely sub-human in morality. The individual is only a means to the ends of the state. The ethics of Nietzsche is derived from the philosophy of Schopenhauer who held that the essence of man is will and not reason. For Nietzsche struggle for power was good. Nietzsche's moral ideal is that of the strong, hard, ruthless man who uses any power to crush his rival. Nietzsche and Schopenhauer never wanted man to give up reason, but wanted reason to do the behests of will. They wanted reason to be a mere tool in the hands of instinct. This leaves man with the philosophy of the animal or the primitive man of complete egoism for whom he himself, his desires, his needs and his personality have an infinite, absolute value. This philo-

sophy of the primacy of the will with its emphasis on one's own self as the sole centre of absolute and intrinsic value is the philosophy of the tiger. It is the application to life of this philosophy that has put in the hands of Germany the deadly and formidable weapon, the philosophy of 'blood and iron'. That Germany is compelled to make use of this weapon for her self-preservation and national integrity may be justifications enough for Germany, into the merits of which the present discussion does not take us.

From what we have seen of the Nazi philosophy two facts stand out: In degrading reason and making it serve instinct or will, the Nazi philosophy has in effect gagged reason and has thereby deprived itself of its (reason's) transforming influence. Secondly, in doing so, it has been blind to the full aspect of Man and is content with a crudely partial view of man. To reckon without reason (by which we mean, not the reason of the French Enlightenment but the Pure Reason, rather in the Kantian sense) is to miss the voice of man's inner being. Rightly has the poet put in the mouth of Raphael (in his speech to Adam) the declaration:

. . . whence the soul Reason receives, and reason is her being, Discursive or intuitive: It is reason of this variety, truly the soul's being that can like the Buddhi of the Indian philosophers give man a total perspective of himself with due emphasis on his latent divinity, and develop for him a helpful philosophy of life. But the prostitution of reason by the Nazi philosophy has ended in partial and exclusive idolatries that inculcate hatred and pride and culminate in a dangerous philosophy.

We must remind ourselves here that the degradation and misuse of reason and the subordinate position assigned to it in life, is not the crime of the German philosophy only. It is one of the modern influences that has poisoned the wells of public thought in the west. Reason has become a mere tool in the hands of desire. It is now made to serve the ends which we set ourselves by inventing excuses for what we instinctively want to believe. To this disastrous change in the attitude to reason, psycho-analysis has largely contributed. According to Prof. McDougall, one of the front-rank psycho-analysts, 'instincts are the prime movers of all human activity'. Reason today dances to the

tune which instinct pipes her. The higher activities of the human spirit are not enjoyed on merits; they are sops which man has invented to salve the instincts which have been wounded by his renunciations. Reviewing the situation Mr. C. E. M. Joad writes: 'Morality is not the recognition of an intrinsic difference between rightness and wrongness, of which conscience is the arbiter. Art is not an acknowledgment of a beauty in the world, religion of an underlying reality to which man may hope to penetrate and of a purpose which he may hope to fulfil; they are merely the by-products of unconscious urges in ourselves'. This fall in the higher values of life and the fatal anarchy it has brought about in modern thought and life are the results of the dethronement of Pure Reason, of the partial view of life and the resultant defective philosophy. Philosophers from Plato onwards have reiterated that the aim of true philosophy is to see life *as a whole*. And Reason is the basic factor of such a philosophy.

Centuries ago the Indian seers have spoken the same truth in words rendered more emphatic by their realizations. They have averred that an all-comprehensive

view of man and a synoptic insight into his real nature alone can evolve a philosophy benign to life and have unerringly made Buddhi the handmaid of such a philosophy. For, Buddhi is the faculty of synoptic vision in man (*cf. Kathopanishad & the Bhagavadgita*). It can effectively help man in the process of progressive self-integration which will endue him with wisdom and the correct perspective of the higher values of life. In this our ancients were prophetic: they foresaw that widespread chaos is sure to ensue in life if Buddhi were to be degraded and gagged; and were wise enough to assign to it the deserving status and a significant role. We see how the modern West has missed this wisdom and with what results!

Buddhi in the Indian philosophy may be approximated to the Kantian Reason. By 'pure' reason Kant meant knowledge belonging to us by the inherent nature and structure of the mind. The mind of man (and this is the great thesis of Kant) is an organ which transforms the chaotic multiplicity of experience into an ordered unity of thought. Since Buddhi according to Indian seers is the faculty of the synoptic insight, we can, without do-

ing violence, bring these two terms near for the purpose of our present discussion. Buddhi is not the servant of the senses or the mind but their master. It is not equated with intellect or intelligence in general, as is done in the west. It is that which gives certain and definite knowledge of Reality, by illuminating man's inner being in its cosmic setting. It is *samyag-darshan*, wholeness of view as opposed to partial knowledge. It is spiritual wisdom, *atmatattva nischayatmika*, or synoptic insight which gains for us the vision that sees the One in all, which brings, in Aldous Huxley's words, the 'sympathetic awareness of the totality'. The *Gita* teaches that to take refuge in this Buddhi is to usher in the dawn of the vision of oneness, the supreme realization spoken of as the *Brahmisthiti*. This realization has inspired the Indian seers to join philosophy and religion in a team, with philosophy always functioning to serve religion. And they saw that this religion is of the greatest pragmatic value to life. Because they knew that for men to come to this religion of same-sightedness is to banish all hatred and violence from their hearts and to turn their back on wars for all time.

If reason in the West has

not helped man to gain this synoptic insight, the integral vision, and if philosophy there did not rise above 'systems' and theorizing and did not embrace life, it is because the West has failed to give reason the status of Buddhi and, install it as the guiding deity of their lives. Centuries ago Kant with fervour and sincerity too intense to be questioned attempted in his '*Religion within the limits!*' of *Pure Reason*' to change the base of religion from theology to morals, from creeds to conduct. But such cries had been cries in the wilderness. This has resulted in partial views of man and nature evolving defective philosophies and grotesque idolatries which have bred in men's hearts violence and barbarism. War and violence become in turn the prime causes of more war and violence. But violence is its own worst enemy and like a devilish engine it recoils back on its user and makes short work of him. Partial views of man and the universe cannot thrive for 'nature of all things abhors a vacuum'. There is massive historic vindication that nations with their roots in a partial perspective of man, in a materialistic philosophy, have not stood their ground. Assyria, Rome and Carthage, where are they! The quick-

sand of materialism on which they stood have swallowed them up. These are lessons which will never be lost on India. India has had her due share of vicissitudes in history but they have never shaken her true being. She had her darkest days when Timurs, Genghiz Khans and Alauddins swooped upon her in mad fury and started rivers of blood. But blood is after all the symbol of the seemingly precious but really worthless in us. And in spite of her bloody vicissitudes India lives to this day unshaken in her spiritualistic faith. Verily this stand of hers is a potential challenge to all future vicissitudes.

In the vast driftings of the cosmic weather many a jewelled shore appears and many an enchanted cloud-bank floats away, long lingering ere it be dissolved—yet leaving the world no copy. Witnessing these India says to herself, 'those glories and grandeurs, they are yours absolutely, even in the midst of your defacements. Whatever may happen to you, whatever you may appear to be, inwardly you are safe. Look within, lie back on your true principle of being, the Atman, the one without a second. There is no duality here. An absolute one and I that one'. India has made this invulnerable philosophy

her religion. Surely, we have here a religion which has a high pragmatic value; it imparts a 'perfect sumptuousness of security'. It encourages fidelity to ourselves; it sanctifies the human flux; it measures our finite lives up to its infinite significance; it paints us on a gold background; it opens the gloomy pass of this life into the open, azure infinity of the spirit. It elevates and reassures and whispers to us, 'We go on for ever'. India believes in a power that guarantees an ideal order that shall be permanently preserved. A world with a God to say the last word may indeed burn up or freeze, but we think of him as still mindful of the old ideals and sure to bring them elsewhere to fruition; so that where he is, tragedy is only provisional and partial and shipwreck and dissolution not the absolutely final things. It is in this *Philosophia Perennis*, the *sanatana dharma*, that India has her roots and even if all the seas go dry these perennial, imperishable springs will feed India with the waters of immortality. Death may yawn to swallow us; but to be funky would mean strange disloyalty to our heroic Mother philosophy. This is the time for us to take fateful decisions and fear and funkiness are the least helpful on this behalf.

Let us throw all fear to the quarters and gather courage and calm to face the inevitable, if need be, with a serene smile that would baffle death by surviving it.

## CONVERSION: A STUDY OF THE PHENOMENON

*By K. C. Varadachari, M.A., Ph.D.*

Conversion is an important though not an invariably simple process in religious consciousness. It is usual to consider conversion to be a social index or social phenomenon of recruitment of persons into a set dogma or creed by means of certain rites more or less complicated and considered to be symbolic. But what indeed do these rites which are symbolic symbolise except a certain alteration in the attitude to reality? This being the case it would be necessary to understand the principles at work in all conversions and the forces which lead to the alterations in outlook and conduct and philosophy. Conversion then cannot be dismissed lightly though there is great truth in the remarks which George Bernard Shaw made. 'The great danger of conversion in all ages has been that when the religion of the high mind has been offered to the lower mind, feeling its fascination without understanding it, and being incapable of rising to it, drags it down to its level

by degrading it. Years ago I said that the conversion of a savage to Christianity is the conversion of Christianity to savagery.' (p. 588 *Prefaces*). This only applies to the ineffectual religion of the Higher mind, and certainly when offered to the lower mind, not to speak of ourselves who have a lower mind, we do not appreciate the integral unity of the inspiration, and understand that inspiration and light through the dark-spectacles of our training and education and environment. We think in terms of frozen ideas or concepts bearing certain traditional meanings (*rudhi*) and even having certain etymological significances but certainly these are not adequate to the supernatural or supramental light that is forced to make itself available to us. It is precisely because our language gets settled and fixed we have to express ourselves in a different form or with such variations of that language as might be permitted to us by the environment for the sake of intelligi-

bility. What G. B. S. has stated thus means that there is a large stepping down of the truth and incidentally loss of whatever is valuable in it. What remains is the mere form and nothing more. As time goes on this form becomes meaningless and without any significance to man's conscious life unless the cue into this is preserved in the *mysteries* or *rahasyas* of the several sects. The ordinary man however without this access to the inner significance and symbolism becomes no better for his conversion.

The second important question that arises in our analysis of conversion as a social phenomenon is that it has been usually associated with a militant spirit of proselytization. This is at first due to the universal significance of the truth discovered by the founder or the seers, which is precisely what we mean by the *contagious spirit* of conversion of others to our views. In this process of conversion of others to one's own inner vision or perception or attitude, there usually result infinite degrees of compromise, riddled with give and take which really are not characteristic of the original Vision or attitude. Thus there results 'stepping down of truth' or what is meant by

G. B. S's 'conversion of Christianity to savagery'. But this need not be always a fact at the beginning of the conversion or incidence of the new revelation. For it may take the uncompromising attitude of the early fathers of the Church or the followers of Islam and this resulted in martyrdom or vandalism. Force when it turns political leads to vandalism; if not effective it becomes anti-social and martyries the individual. In other words, it invades other consciousnesses and coerces them to yield to its revelation, or if it cannot do that, it becomes a constant continuous stream of thought<sup>1</sup> inward and self-sufficient for which there is no alternative in the outside world. Death even is courted; and fire and other tortures do not affect the inward conviction of the righteousness of the revelation. We can of course discover this two-fold methodology in our history books. But what is indeed valuable about this crusading consciousness is not its force that claims to be supramental, but its extrovertness. It is however clear in the two religions of Buddhism and Jainism this crusading element was essentially of the pacific kind and was not militant. This fact must lead us to suspect that it is not

<sup>1</sup> Martyr is etymologically related to *martur* (Greek) and *Smarati* in Sanskrit

necessary even for extrovert activity to think in terms of force or coercion of the body and mind into a pattern of conduct fixed once for all by some seer or avatar or vibhuti.

In the above paragraph I have already replied to the third question I had placed before myself as to whether conversion is possible only through force, be this force of some external kind either spiritual or physical, through which the converter seeks to adapt others to his viewpoint. The next question I ask myself on this subject is whether it is not men who are really of a lower level who cannot appreciate the nice opportunities of the higher life who ought to be converted *by force* and not all persons? In other words, if we accept, as G.B.S. seems to accept, that there are men of higher mind and consciousness and men who have a lower mentality, then there must be one way for the intelligentia and another for the ordinary, for the one, force and for the other, persuasion. This obviously takes too much for granted regarding human capacities, though to be sure, there is much warrant for it. Nor could we in all cases of the intelligentia be sure of our getting the result we aim at since we find that most persons who

are intelligent are most difficult to persuade much less to convert, even when we offer them the very best of our sympathetic consideration. No wonder the persons in the concentration camps from ancient times downwards are not the ordinary or below the normal men but the intelligentia, the aristocrats of intellectual honesty and spiritual probity. Thus whilst we may possibly explain the Buddhistic and Jainistic conversions as due to persuasion, this persuasion has been not mainly intellectual but practical in its aim, social meliorism combined with spiritual wakening of the impulse towards perfection and freedom from sorrow.

The fifth question is should we not discover the essential possibility of conversion, not at all in the social meliorism or social dictatorship, but in the fact that somehow we are converted directly by a force of vision or perception of a spiritual verity incommutable through the ordinary means of inference and analogy or even mythology. There is something that is fundamentally personal in the perception of the new attitude which cannot be taught at all, but is something that is, all the same, visualised and understood in a manner undreamt of by any amount of persuasion. Per.

suasion yet lives in the land of doubt, and grows by the light of faith. Not so conversion brought about by the inner vision, personal and supremely comforting seeking no other sanction beyond itself. Conversion is brought about really by an intrinsic experience. Thus we have to hold that conversion is something that has a spiritual cause not a social cause, though to be sure there is nothing preventing this spiritual cause ultimately possessing a social effect.

Having thus cleared the ground of certain misconceptions about conversion, I shall define conversion as a profound total orientation of an individual in his mind and body and all towards the object of man's highest quest. It can be compared with decision in respect of our willed action. The object so sought is the Divine Reality which may be a person or a vague intimation of the Superpersonal Deity. All the same it is a unique personal relationship. From a purely objective standpoint and even from an impersonal standpoint man finds himself drawn inexorably and inevitably towards a personal relation with that object. It is thus found that conversion involves the individual's thraldom to the object, a thraldom which is not a sense

of 'frustration' but a sense of 'fulfilment'. Needless to say this conversion leads to a quickened perception of a new order, a divine and causal order of reality leading upto a more and more or rather fuller and fuller experience of the plenum of Divine Experience wherever one turns.

In a sense conversion only means a diversion of one kind of currency into another type or kind. Energy is converted from mechanical into heat or electric. Conversion in Spiritual life means the change wrought in the system of energies that we possess. Human energy is to be changed into divine energy. But this is possible only because of the incidence of a higher light or Grace of God. Bhakti leads to the descent of Grace or light which operates as the converter of one system of energies into quite a different kind of energy. The Philosophy of Yoga is a great process undertaken for the purpose of demechanizing the activities, devitalizing the vital activities, dehumanizing the mental activities, and finally converting them into the Divine energy. This may be achieved one after another. Thus the Hatha-yoga leads up to Raja-yoga, and this in turn leads to Jnana-yoga which finally has to lead up to the Highest Divine Yoga or

integral yoga. This process or path is undertaken by most persons because one has here a neat well-paved, or at least there are sufficiently small, steps on the path. The conversions here achieved are not of the ordinary kind but they are certainly not extraordinary. But really what the ordinary man feels and what most psychologists feel about conversion is that it is a sudden change in attitude and the acceptance of a new order supernatural or supramental. They consider that it is an invasion of one's consciousness by another higher consciousness. We may add 'any consciousness higher or lower,' though to be sure the former leads to release and growth and the latter leads to disaster and the pathological state of dementia and disintegration of personality. But confining our definition to the higher, we may at once see that conversion involves the companionship with, if not actually the indwellingness of, a higher consciousness, in and through which we find that we are in touch continuously with the entire universe, integral to it, and inseparable from it. This particular relationship needs to be known as one of closest intimacy bordering on ecstasy. It is a moment of greatest intensity of consciousness,—a flash of

light,—a sudden elevation that is moral or mystical,—and a sudden feeling of largeness of heart and mind comparable to omniscience and benevolence. Prof. William James had remarked that conversion is a gradual process whose last term alone is perceived. A period of preparation, or a period of incubation, intervenes between the beginning of the dawn and the midday of spiritual light. But what he and other psychologists of conversion do not perceive is that this conversion, though *as a process* is an unconscious orientation, is not an unconsciousness itself throwing out its enfolded truth or reality. Conversion involves the knowledge of the Source of the converting force or that which is expressed as the supra-mundane Transcendent over the ordinary and as such is a very intelligent ordering of our attitude towards an integral or total response to it in terms of thought, feeling and act.

Carefully considered we find that conversion in its incubative period is nothing other than a preparation for the jump over the hurdles of ignorance and frustration envisaged in the world-order or philosophy of pure materialism or bare intellectualism. This jump or breakthrough is achieved, as it

possibly can be achieved, only through concentration of force. Yoga does it consciously, and conversion is achieved most times without this *conscious* concentration of force. But we may point out that this concentration that is consciously made is capable of inducing certain forces directly opposite to the total conversion; from the ego-centric to the theocentric or dei-centric situation seems to be an impossibility, as a rule when it is yoga that is directed and controlled and sustained by one's own will to power. In conversion that proceeds from the supramental plane there is not this opposition and also it is capable of bringing about with an assurance of strength and spontaneous directness and without the motivations of our consciousness. The Grace of God is something of which the human mind may not be aware of till it feels it in its actual feeling. All the pathetic practices of rites and rituals strenuous readings and recitations or repetitions of mystic syllables, discriminations and enumerations of entities and intellectualizing of man cannot make him possess this consciousness of Grace. Grace is something which the individual must deserve and all the preparation that is needed in this is the concentrated surrender

of all to the Divine in thought (*jnana*) in action (*karma*) and in devotion or service(*bhakti*). This is the surrender that is total, unreserved and final. The abandonment of all action that is not dictated by God in the inner being of man, the abandonment of all thought that is not initiated by God the indwelling seer of all and Lord, and the abandonment of all devotion that is not devotion to the one supreme Being alone and not to anything else is the *sine qua non* of a preparation to receive the Grace. Conversion is a result of the Grace, *prasada*, of God; it is not a result of rewards for our intellectual attainments or ritualistic actions or worship. In other words, the final ordering of conversion is such that the plane to which it leads men up through the vision is the plane in which there is the mutual fulfilment of both the *purusharthas* of self-liberation and adoration of the perfect Lord and finally ecstasy of intimacy. This last point requires some elucidation. Conversion is a progress from a lower plane to a higher plane *via* vision of the higher. To most people it appears to be a liberation from their shackled existence in the lower; to others it appears as a fulfilment of their natural need for a higher and larger life of Spirit.

Thus the distinction between the mystical consciousness of utter and entire liberty and freedom and the religious consciousness of dependence on the larger and vaster life of the universe gets its ample expression in the conversion—phenomenon. Or, in other words, we find that this dualism between mysticism and religious consciousness, or impersonalism and personal God or theism, is capable of being fulfilled adequately by conversion.

The examples of conversion are indeed many. Sudden ecstasy leading up to conversion has been the lot of most mystics, and religious saints who had visions of a sudden can be classed hereunder. The lives of the first three Alvars show that the Vision came to them in a flash all at once but in three different ways: the first through knowledge had the vision of the All-creator; the second had through devotionalized knowledge the vision of God as all-lover, or Providence; the third alvar through transcendent devotion as a result of the devotionalized knowledge

saw the Divine as His own self, along with the Mother of the Universe. The life of Tirumangal or Parakalan came through the love of a woman who taught him the divine law and way. Yamunacharya came to recognize his vocation to be God all of a sudden. Buddha's conversion came slowly, in four steps as it were, and began a series of further steps till he attained *Nirvana*. Instances can be multiplied without number in the lives of even the meanest amongst us. But the danger always is that conversion through sudden ecstasy may yield impermanent results. We know of many individuals who having tasted the ecstasy have been unable to have it continuously and thus lost all belief in its reality if not efficacy. To make it continuous it is necessary to fix the Divine in the centre, make our heart the temple of the Divine. This alone can guarantee the permanence and continuity of our evolution in spiritual life and make conversion the starting point of our evolutionary ascent into Divine nature.

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## VISISHTADVAITA AND THE EPICS

By T. Sundarachariar, B.A., B.L.

Three features of the system of Visishtadvaita philosophy give it a pre-eminence over other systems : its insistence on the reality of all things that exist in and around us; its stress on personality or individuality, and the importance it attaches to qualities. This system rightly emphasizes the real nature of all things, of even the objects seen in dreams, for without a sense of reality, man can never put forth his best endeavours for the achievement of anything here or hereafter. If everything is unreal or illusory, there would be no incentive for human effort. So also the sense of individuality based on distinctness is essential for success. If individuality is believed to be unreal and if Brahman were considered to be the only Real, there could be no richness in the life here or the life beyond. Qualities do exist in the individual self and in the supreme self. The qualities that are due to Prakriti or primordial matter in the Jiva give rise to action or karma that leads to bondage and these qualities or *gunas* can be conquered only by the grace of a God who has qualities in himself. The supreme Brahman is therefore held by Visishtadvaitins as having hosts of auspicious qualities by virtue of which He shows his redemptive power in the salvation of Jivas thrown into bondage owing to their excess of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

Our two great *Itihasas* illustrate the effect on the human soul of the interplay of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and the means of overcoming their power. In the *Mahabharata*, Dhritarashtra whose physical blindness is symbolic of his inner blindness or *tamas* enquires of means to overcome physical death in his egotistical affection for his sons. It is at this time when his *tamas* reaches its peak that Sanatkumara appears before him and reveals to him the great truth that wise men do not desire to conquer physical death but do their very best to conquer that death which goes by the name of *moha* or *pramada*. Similarly when Arjuna or Savyasachi, the ideal man of action, is swayed by an excess of *rajas* in the forefront of the army at the sight of his relatives assembled in the ranks of the enemy, the Lord reveals to him the true philosophy of the soul, of life and immortality in the *Gita*. When Yudhishtira who

is the type of those with a preponderance of *sattva* in their nature asks the question, *Kim japan muchyate* etc. The sage Bhishma answers it with a view to the redemption of all human beings.

The *Ramayana* may be looked upon as a poetic embodiment of the Visishtadvaitic doctrine. The theme of the poem is *Konvasmin sam-pratam loke gunavan*<sup>1</sup> etc. (In this world, today, who is the abode of good qualities). The insistence on qualities or *vishesha* may be seen here and elsewhere. Poets give a concrete shape to abstract conceptions and make them living realities or persons. Kumbhakarna is the personification of *tamas*, Ravana of *rajas* and Vibhishana of *sattva*. The effects of these qualities on their respective souls form, in a sense, the central theme of the poem. According to the Hindu conception of ethics, there are three norms or ethical standards by which life should be regulated, *hri*, *sri* and *kirti*. *Hri* is the sense of shame which, when it rightly guides man, pulls him back, as it were, when his mind contemplates doing what is wicked or unrighteous. *Sri* is wealth, power and position which, when employed in the service and for the benefit of

others, saves the soul of their possessor. *Kirti* i.e. fame or success is the principle by which man attains fame by enriching the lives of others and conquering his lower self.

Ravana misused and twisted out of shape these three principles or ethical norms. His sense of shame, instead of arresting him while pursuing wicked ends, made it difficult for him to withdraw from evil when his action was shown to be evil. It was of the nature of egoistic pride or haughtiness. The principle of *sri* also was perverted by him from its proper function. His conquests and spoils were not for the benefit of others. They were only additions to his own comforts and luxuries and *sri* only pandered to his vicious indulgence. The glory or *kirti* that he sought was not the fame that comes of itself and unsolicited when man works for others conquering his baser self. It was an egotistical greed for personal aggrandisement. These three principles, vitiated in this unholy manner, led to their natural consequence in his physical and, what is worse, spiritual ruin. As against Ravana's improper use of these three guiding principles, the poet images in Rama and his

<sup>1</sup> Valmiki questions Narada thus (*Ramayana*, Balakanda 2.)

brothers their rightful place in a well-ordered scheme of spiritual life. Rama was ashamed at the idea of remaining in Ayodhya when his father had asked him to leave it. Lakshmana and Bharata showed by their selfless exertions for their brother the proper guidance of *sri* and *hri*. It was stated before that Kumbhakarna and Ravana illustrate the spiritual ruin brought about by *tamas* and *rajas* and that Vibhishana is an illustration of the spiritual redemption brought about by *sattva*. It may be remarked, in passing, that the manifestation of *sattva* by Vibhishana is in some respects different from that seen in Bhishma. Being a Rakshasa by birth his movement towards righteousness is abrupt and sudden amounting to a painful wrench while Bhishma's *sattva* shows itself in acquiescence resulting from a high sense of loyalty.

The *Ramayana* may thus be looked upon as a poetic creation intended to illustrate the stress laid by Visishtadvaitic philosophers on quality or *vishesha*. The God that they worship is a God who has

beneficent and auspicious attributes. Madhusudana Sarasvati in one of his writings, divides all seekers after Brahman into two classes: *drutachitta*, and *adrutachitta*, those whose hearts are tender and melting, and those whose minds seek the dry light of reason without caring for the softness and colour of emotion. Temperaments of the former class can find no solace in a Brahman free from all attributes. Their Brahman should have the warmth and glow of personality. Without attributes, Brahman to them is contentless and destitute of meaning and cannot be the cause of eternal happiness or salvation. Strangely enough, Advaitic thinkers, when they leave the dry, bleak heights of reason, display a far greater rapture and blissfulness while contemplating Brahman as endowed with noble attributes. Sankara in his commentary on the words *sumukha* and *svvrata* in the *Vishnusahasranama* and on the line *Sarvah Sarvah Sivah sthanuh* shows this sense of warmer passion and deeper rapture than even the Visishtadvaitins themselves.

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## THE PHILOSOPHY OF SAIVA SIDDHANTA

*By S. Satchidanandam Pillai, B.A., L.T.*

'The Saiva Siddhanta is the most elaborate, influential and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all the religions of India', wrote Dr. G. U. Pope. And Rev. F. Goodwill followed with the remark: 'Those who have studied the system unanimously agree that this eulogy is not a whit too enthusiastic or free worded'. The elaborateness just referred to is a difficulty in the way of a brief exposition. However, an attempt will be made to present a faithful outline of this system of thought and to dispel some popular fallacies regarding Saivism.

The term 'Saiva Siddhanta' denotes a complete system of philosophical thought concerning the nature and relations of God, souls and the universe, and of the religious practice whereby souls attain salvation. 'Saiva' is derived from 'Sivam' which is ordinarily taken to mean 'the auspicious' or the 'blissful' Lord. And 'Siddhanta' means the conclusion of conclusions. In Tamilagam Saiva Siddhanta is often simply referred to as 'Siddhantam' or 'Saivam'. Siddhanta is referred to also as 'Agamanta'. It is both a philosophy and a religion. Its claims to truth are based not only on the re-

vealed nature of its scriptures but also on reason and the personal realization of a long line of Saiva seers.

This system possesses the merits of great antiquity. In the religious world, the Saiva system is heir to all that is most ancient in South India. 'It is the religion of the Tamil people, by the side of which every other form is of comparatively foreign origin', wrote Rev. W. F. Goudie. From literary sources we gather that its antiquity goes back to the Vedas. The very terms used in Saiva Siddhanta to denote God, soul and the world namely *pati*, *pasu* and *pasa* are Vedic. In vedic-ritual *pati* is the lord of sacrifice, *pasu* is the animal offered in sacrifice and *pasa* the rope binding the *pasu* to the *yupastambha*. To this day in almost every Siva temple we find the *yupastambha* as *dwajastambha*, the altar of sacrifice as *balipeettham*, the *pasu* which has sacrificed its individuality or *pasubodha* and has acquired beatitude as *Nandi* facing the Lord, and the *pati* in the shape of linga representing to the Saivites the *Atmalinga* or the *Jyotirlinga* in the lotus of the heart, and to the eye of the vedic sacrificer the sacrificial flame in the *yagakunda*—the

sacrificial pit. The worship of Siva comes down in an unbroken line from the vedic through the Upanishadic, epic and puranic ages. And the recent researches in the sind valley have shown that it is even pre-vedic in its antiquity.

Saiva Siddhanta also professes to be a revealed religion. From the orthodox Saiva point of view its scriptures are the vedas and the twenty - eight Sivagamas. Lord Siva himself is considered to be their author.<sup>1</sup> *Tevaram*, *Tiruvacagam* and four other collections all of which together form the *Panniru Tirumurai* in Tamil are considered sacred scriptures. *Tevaram* and *Tiruvacagam* in particular are regarded as Tamil vedas for Saivaites.

The authoritative books in Tamil on the philosophy of Saiva Siddhanta are the fourteen Siddhanta Sastras. *Sivajnanabodham* in sutra form is the original treatise which most of the others expound. St. Meykandar, the saint of Tiruvainainallur of the 11th or 12th century A. D., is the author of the Tamil *Sivajnanabodham*. In the Tamil land the scriptures in Sanskrit are not well-known to the bulk of the

Saivaites. The temple *archakas* are more or less conver-sant with some of the Agamas. But *Tevaram*, *Tiruvacagam*, *Tirumantra*, the *Sivajnanabodham* and 'the works based on it are living works still illumining their lives.

It is not possible to take up here the interesting ques-tion of the need for the *Sivagamas* when there are the Vedas already. There is a famous verse of St. Tirumular regarding this relation wherein he says that the Vedas are general and meant for all, whereas the Agamas are meant for those who have attained to a certain level of spiritual culture. This is a view endorsed by St. Nilakantha Sivacharya in his commentary on the *Brahma Sutras*. In the Agamas the *kriyas* not mentioned in the Karmakanda of the Vedas—*kriyas* essential for treading the direct spiritual path are elaborated. The confusion of thought arising from the apparent contradictions in the Vedanta is cleared and the essence of the Upani-shads given in the jnanapada of these Agamas, the *charya*, *kriya* and *yoga* being the three other padas.

In Saivaism the nature of God, souls and the world is

<sup>1</sup> Among the more ancient and principal Upanishads, the eclectic *Svetasvatara* contains the most cogent and distinct account of Saiva philosophy.

known as Tripadarthas.<sup>2</sup> Before giving a sketch of these, it must be said that the account which is to follow is according to the 'Saiva Siddhanta' school of thought which is known as Suddhavaita Saivism or Siddhanta Saivism as distinguished from certain other forms of Saivism namely Pasupatha, Mahavrata, Kapalika, Vama, Vairava and Aikyavada or Veerasaiva.<sup>3</sup> As already pointed out the technical terms appropriated by Siddhanta to refer to these entities is *pati*, *pasu* and *pasa*. Their nature and relation to one another are discussed exhaustively in the fourteen Siddhanta Sastras, especially in Sivajnanabodham, Sivajnana Siddhiyar and Sivaprakasam.

*Pati* or God has two aspects: As He is in Himself, the Svarupa or Parasiva aspect and as He stands in inseparable relation with souls and matter, i.e., the *tatastha* or *pati* aspect. In other words God is called Parasivam or Sivam in the first aspect and *pati* or Sadasiva in the second aspect involving the *panchakrityas*. The Supreme Sivam is spo-

ken of as Nirguna, and yet is conceived as a personal being. The explanation is that He has no qualities arising from the *gunas* of *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and hence is Nirguna. But He has the divine attributes of omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, infinite bliss, infinite mercy, incorporeal existence, eternal and inherent freedom from bondage or *mala*, etc. These attributes are sometimes numbered as eight, sometimes as six and sometimes compressed into three.

In His aspect of *pati* He is known as Sadasiva and for the sake of freeing souls from their bondage of *mala* He performs the five acts of creation, protection, destruction, concealment and revelation. He creates bodies, *antahkaranas*, worlds and environments and arranges for the souls' pilgrimage through the worlds with bodies best suited to them so that they may progressively gain freedom from bondage and attain oneness with Him by realising their eternal *advaita* relation with Him.

Sivam has His Sakti or divine grace inseparable from

<sup>2</sup> It is according to Siddhanta Saivism that I proceed to give an account of the three verities.

<sup>3</sup> These six are known in Tamil as *Agappura Samayam*, i.e., religions which are just outside the inner circle of Saivism. The first five forms are not now found in Southern India, at any rate not in the Tamil land. The point to note is that Siddhanta Saivism is distinct from all these both in philosophy and in its religious practices.

Him, just as the sun's rays are inseparable from the sun. His compassion, His power, and His *jnana* are spoken of as so many *saktis*. This *sakti* is spoken of as female and the Lord as male, knowing all the while that the supreme is not to be identified with one sex or the other. But to show that He is the indweller and inspirer from within every being whether male or female, He has assumed the forms of male and female as Siva and Sakti or even in one as *arthanarisvara*. But it is clearly emphasized in the Siddhanta Sastras that this Sakti is not matter or maya though it vivifies maya. The forms which he takes are not of matter even in the subtlest form. Sivam and Sakti are transcendental yet they are brought home to us as Father and Mother.

"Know that Umamaheswara is the Father and the Mother of all the world :

Our Father and Mother will show us Grace as such,

Our Father and Mother transcend all the worlds  
Even here they stand as though they are not"

—*Uyyavanda devar.*

Another important point emphasized in Saiva Siddhanta is that Siva is not one of the *trimurtis* of Hinduism as many people think.

The Siva or Rudra of the Hindu Trinity is classed among souls. He has attained to his office by virtue of his spiritual progress and has come so near to Lord Siva that he has acquired all the distinguishing forms of the Lord, the *Kalakantha*, the *trinetra*, etc. He is distinguished by the name, *Gunarudra* or *Kalagni Rudra* whereas the supreme Lord is called *Turiya Rudra* or *Maha Rudra*. His *Sakti* is called Rudrani and she dwells in the Kalagnirudra Bhuvana whereas the *Sakti* of Siva is called Parasakti and in his *tatastha* form He dwells with Her as Uma on Mt. Kailas.

Some of the Upanishads themselves clearly make this distinction. Sivam is spoken of as the *Chaturtham* or the fourth. *Tevaram* and *Tiruvacagam* also are very clear on this point. One of these hymns describes Him as one whom neither the *trimurtis* nor the thirty-three *devas* can see.

Another illuminating fact to note is that Siva or Sakti does not incarnate. They assume any form they need at will and disappear as soon as the purpose which called it forth is fulfilled. In this regard the Mohamedan conception of God may be compared to this feature.

God is one without a second according to Saivism.

The root mantra, *ekamevad-vityam Brahma* is so interpreted in the *Sivajnanabodham* though He inspirits a hierarchy of evolved souls called *devas* including the *trimurtis* to govern the universe and to facilitate the successful spiritual pilgrimage of infinite souls. He is One with none as his equal. But the souls are many and infinite. Days following days in uninterrupted succession and the water particles of a perennial stream are cited as analogies. The souls are uncreated, distinct entities co-existent with God though dependant upon Him for their perfection. 'When thou wert I was. Still am I not thy servant' asks St. Thayumanavar. Each soul has its distinct bent of nature which accounts for the infinite individual differences in the world. But all souls possess certain fundamental characteristics in common. Their real nature of being is *chit* or knowledge. But from the very beginning, *mala* or *pasa* has been holding them in bondage, so that they could neither see themselves as *chits* nor the *mala* which binds them—much less the Lord.

Two important characteristics of the soul are clearly brought out in the Siddhanta works and they form the key to the solution of many intric-

ate problems relating to salvation and the means therefor. They are the inability of the soul to remain all by itself in isolation in any stage of its existence and the quality of becoming one with what it is united. When it is in union with *mala*, the principle of darkness, it remains in darkness, in spite of its being essentially *chit*. When it is in union with the supreme it becomes the supreme and shares His nature. In some of the Upanishads and the Gita the soul is compared to the crystal or the mirror. So also a well-known hymn of St. Thayumanavar depicts Lord Dakshinamurti saying, 'you are like the crystal that takes on the nature of that which it comes into contact with. My nature is to reveal to you the Truth when you become fit for it'. He asks of the Lord, 'when will the day dawn when I shall stand in *advaita* relation with Thee, even as I do stand now in such union with Anava'. The souls receive six names according to the thing with which it stands united. They are (1) Bhutatma, (2) Antaratma, (3) Tatvatma, (4) Jeevatma, (5) Mantratma, (6) Paramatma (cf. *Sarvajnottara Agama*.)

These souls are classified into three groups, Vijnanakalas, Pralayakalas and Sakkalas, according to the degree

of freedom they have achieved. From the Hindu trinity right down to the lowest ameba belong the third group of Sakalas. The second class of souls have Anava and Karma only and have bodies and worlds of a much subtler kind than those of the *devas*. Souls of the first class have only Anava still clinging to them; i.e., the consciousness of their ego as distinct from the Lord. Elaborate details of the *bhuvanas* where the souls live and the nature of their lives are given—details which we ordinary men can in no way verify.

The *pasa* of Saiva Siddhanta is also called *mala*. It is sub-divided in some books into three and in others into four or five. The division into three is the more common. These are Anava, Karma and Maya. The attributes of each are detailed minutely in Saiva philosophical treatises. *Pasa* is a really existing thing and is not a mere illusion. Anavam is not *crautignana*, not *tamoguna*, nor maya nor karma nor even Sivasakti. It is the root principle of ignorance and of the sense of *ahamkara* and *mamakara*. It hides from the soul a knowledge both of itself and of God and souls. Karma is the law or principle which binds souls to the fruits of their actions, good and bad.

And maya, (from *Ma.* = that which is an involute and *ya* = that which evolves) is a matter in two grades of subtlety. It is the primordial matter into which all things and worlds involve at the time of *pralaya* and from which all things evolve at the time of creation. This matter or maya is divided in some of the Upanishads and the *Sankhya Sastras* into twenty-four tatvas. But in the Sivagamas twelve more tatvas are added. All the thirty-six tatvas one material in varying states of density. The soul is not identical with these tatvas although when united with these it feels one with them. Our body and our mind and all the physical universe that we see are the productions of this maya or matter. This maya is again divided into *suddhamaya*, *misramaya* and *asuddha* or *prakritimaya* and the thirty-six tatvas are classified suitably under these three heads.

God stands in *advaita* relation both with *pasu* and *pasa* i.e., with the souls and matter. He is neither the souls nor matter. But He stands in inseparable relation with the two. He envelops them, dwells in them, but yet transcends them. *Pasa* cannot bind Him or cause imperfection in Him as it does with the souls. It is like the poison

in the snake which injures not the snake.

"One with the world and different and both; the light transcendent

The Lord who guides souls innumerable, in obedience to His will and each one's karma;

The Nirmala Being, untouched by the defects of his creatures,

Supreme He stands, secondless pervading all."

—*Sivajnana Siddhiyar.*

This relation of non-duality in which two distinct entities stand inseparably united is called *advaita*. According to Siddhantic thought God's relation to souls and matter is of this kind. The example of soul and body is among those furnished in the Agamas. It may be noted that Saiva Siddhanta is not, as often wrongly supposed, Visishtadvaita-like Vaishnavism, nor the Ekatmavada of the Sankara school of thought. It is called *Advaita* or *Suddhadvaita* in Siddhanta works. Highly interesting and subtle discussions are to be found in the *Sivajnana Siddhiyar* and *Sivajnana-bodham* with its splendid commentary in Tamil by Sri-gnana Swamigal on the meaning of this term *Advaita*.

The plan of salvation for the soul is based on the nature of the soul primarily.

As remarked above the soul feels at one with what is united and it cannot stand alone. It is found first united with *Anava*. The Lord's plan is to wear out the hold of this principle of darkness by pushing the inert soul into the world of activity, into *Samsara* by furnishing it with suitable *tanu*, *karana*, *bhuvana* and *bhoga*. Maya or matter is used by the Lord for providing these facilities. This maya gives partial enlightenment by wearing out gradually the force of darkness clinging to the soul like the chemical accretion on copper. Its power of *ichcha*, *jnana* and *kriya* lying dormant in the soul are gradually provoked into manifestation. It becomes conscious by degrees of the bondage, the means of liberation and latterly of itself and finally of the divine grace and God who has liberated it. Accordingly there are three *avasthas* or states for the soul: *Kevalavastha*, *Sakalavastha* and *suddhavastha*. The pilgrim's progress lies ordinarily through the mineral, the vegetable, the animal and the human kingdoms. God is all the while watching and guiding the purification of the soul. 'Know that He is one who envelops and develops everything' says the *Tiruvacagam*. St. Appar declares that 'the Lord has

been the unseen helper of all his devotees'.

The end of it all in this world is the state of the Jeevanmukta. Realization of God in one's own self and in the world while yet in the body—that is the Jeevan-mukta state. Both in this state and later on, the freed soul realises the *advaita* relation with God. The fruit of this salvation is not merely negative freedom from bondage but also positive sharing of the bliss of the Lord.

There are four *padas* or well-defined stages in this spiritual ladder which the soul ascends after it has thus sufficiently evolved. They are *charya*, *kriya*, *yoga* and *jnana*. The divine grace which has been helping the spiritual evolution of the soul all unknown to itself through aeons appears for *sakalas* in human form when the right moment arrives and points out the way of realising the supreme and then disappears. Until the present *prarabdha* comes to an end the blessed soul lives in its last material tenement, serving the Lord in thought, word and deed as He directs them and becoming freed from the mortal coil once for all when the *prarabdha* ceases.

From the above it will be clear that it is not the soul's

unaided effort or its knowledge or cleverness that succeeds in procuring its release from bondage, but the Lord's *kripa* as the Vaishnavaites would name it. The whole process has been inspired and conducted by divine grace which manifests itself as both *arakkarunai* and *marakkunai* according to the needs of the soul. When through divine grace the soul's latent powers are sufficiently roused it gains knowledge and learns to yearn for at-one-ment with God. That is all the effort it has to make. Says St. Manickvachagar, 'If we cry out (for Thee) we can get Thee'.

But by the assertion of its intellect or powers the soul can never realise God. For God is *avangmanasagochara*. The story of Brahma and Vishnu failing to see respectively the head and feet of the Lord when they started with self-confidence in their powers illustrates this point. St. Tiruvalluvar asks, 'Oh, ye! dumb ones who essay to speak of the One beyond speech! Is it possible to see the shores of that which has no shore at all?'. Only when the supreme Lord gives the soul the power to see Him it can do so. St. Appar says, 'Unless you see with the eye of His grace, you cannot even write as to His form, colour or nature'.

We conclude this sketch with a statement of its attitude towards other religions and systems of thought. While it claims that it gives the fullest and the truest idea of the reality, the nature and the means of the highest stages of salvation, it recognizes that all other faiths are also essential for the well-being of the world and that they are also rooted in Truth so far as they go, and help the spiritual progress of the souls who sincerely tread the paths laid down in them. It is the one and only supreme Being that is worshipped in them also, though without free and adequate comprehension of Reality. The various religions are like the steps in a ladder without which the ladder will be

useless. No religion ought therefore to be condemned as false, so long as it remains true to its own principles. The famous stanza in *Sivaj-nana Siddhiyar* on this point is worthy of quotation :

'Religions, postulates and text-books are various and conflict with one another. It is asked which is the true religion, which the true postulate and which the true book? That is the Religion, Postulate and Book which without possessing the fault of calling this true and that false comprises everything reasonably in its fold. Hence all these are comprised in the Vedas and Sivagamas. And they are imbedded in the sacred foot of Hara'. This kind of universal religion is Saivism.

## SAINT TERESA OF JESUS

*By Wolfram H. Koch*

### HER LIFE

In spite of their realisations and the spiritual heights they attain, saints and mystics almost always keep some characteristics or peculiarities of their times, surroundings and race with which they colour their experiences and illustrate their particular teachings. Without this they could not bring their message to the people of their day and country and would remain strangers, insulated from the living current of the life of their brothers and sisters around them.

The great founder of the reformed Carmelite Order should therefore be

seen against the background of the Europe of her day and of her native city, the Avila of the gray rocks, the many austere towers, massive emblazoned palaces, closely huddled houses, imposing churches and chapels that seem to speak more of hell than of heaven, securely engirdled by its strong walls and protected by its heavy, forbidding gates. This Avila, the Avila de los Caballeros—Avila of the Knights—as it was characteristically called, is the most telling symbol of Teresa's character and qualities. In this proud, self-sufficing and powerful city the passionate heart of the Spanish race beat unabated and un-

daunted in an irresistible intensity of love and hatred, self-denial and cruelty, welding men and women together in the relentless struggle against the 'infidel', the Moor, borne along on the current of the blindest bigotry and intolerance and of the highest realisation of mystic religion and compassion. These contradictions were blended to such an extent in the national character that they formed part of every individual which alone explains the sublimity and the baseness of the actions of that day.

In Teresa's time under Philipp II the city slowly began to lose its splendour as a result of its prolonged ineffectual struggle against the rights of the monarch. But when Teresa was born, Avila was still in all its vigour and glory and fully conscious of its prestige in its haughty self-contained aloofness, for had it not been for years the residence of the Reyes Catolicos—the Catholic Kings—Ferdinand and Isabella, who with their court had lived in the magnificent monastery of Santo Tomás outside the walls of the city?

Avila should be seen when the quiet glow of the evening light slowly begins to enfold it in the luminosity so peculiar to the Castilian atmosphere. Against the background of the distant ragged hills, especially the dark snow-lined ridge of the Sierra de Gredos, the sombre charm of the city penetrates into the soul like a mighty dream of heroes, zealously guarding its by-gone glories and still radiating an intense suggestive power. As the visitor allows this suggestiveness laden with so deep an inner significance to enter his heart, it is drawn away from the shallow bustle and noise of our day and almost imperceptibly opens up to subtler influences of place and eternal presences. And while he thus stands wrapt in his pensive day-dream, he comes to understand more and more the mighty personality of Avila's greatest daughter who reached heights that can perhaps only be surpassed

by her disciple and friend June de Yepes, generally known under the name of Juan de la Cruz.

The spirit and contradictoriness of her times must never be lost sight of when studying Teresa both as the great foundress of the Convents of the Carmelite Order and as a woman and mystic. The mentality of those days is shown in a letter of the Duke of Alba to Catherine de' Medici, written in 1567, in which he says, 'It is infinitely better to preserve through war for God and for the King an impoverished kingdom, nay, even a ruined one, than having it whole without war for the devil and the heretics, his sectarians.' It was a time of passionate sanguinary temperaments, finding its principal representatives in Philipp II, Henry II, Catherine de' Medici, Mary and Elizabeth.

In the second half of the 16th century all European states were swept by terrible gusts of violence and almost organic ruthlessness, by treachery and bloodshed in the name of the Divine and of the struggle for the Divine. In 1559 the stakes of the Inquisition flared up in many of the principal Spanish towns and in 1554 Calvin during his reformatory work had even preceded them by, burning the Spaniard Miguel Servet at Geneva in punishment of his preaching. Everywhere blood and fire and hatred travestied as pure religious fervour and love of God and one's neighbour ran wild, and intoxicated people in an intensity of passion and the peculiar excitement of unhealthy fanaticism fostered and to a great extent even consciously roused by the Church. For the masses have ever rejoiced at havoc and slaughter perpetrated under the cloak of high-sounding, sham-idealistic phrases.

There is a great contrast between the great personalities of Teresa's day and herself. They cherished the greatest contempt for human life and made Machiavelli's *Principe II* their very textbook. Teresa de Ahumada y Cepeda on the other

hand, though she, too, belonged to the highest circles rose ever higher above all worldly temptations and the plane of such ferocities and thirst for power. She learned to be hard on herself and kind to others, to simplify life as much as it possibly could be simplified. She, too, like her contemporaries, like Queen Elizabeth and Mary Tudor and Catherine de' Medici, was driven by a great irresistible passion that gave her marvellous energy, but this passion was of a different nature, this energy tended towards a different goal and fulfilment. It concentrated all its strength on the wish to heal and to help, to make life a better and purer life for man.

Teresa Sanchez de Cepeda y Ahumada was born at Avila on the 28th of March 1515. On the day of her birth her father, Don Alonso de Cepeda, made a note in the following words in the family-book, 'Wednesday, the twenty-eighth day of the month of March of the year 1515 was born Teresa, my daughter, at five o'clock in the morning, may be half an hour earlier, maybe half an hour later, in any case, that Wednesday at sunrise. Her god-father was Vila Nunez and her god-mother Dona Maria del Aguila, daughter of Francisco Pajares.'

In her famous autobiography Teresa herself gives us a fine description of her family. She says, 'To have virtuous and God-fearing parents such as those with whom God had favoured me, would have sufficed to ensure my being good, had I not been so bad. My father was fond of reading good books and had them in the vernacular so that his children might read them. These together with the care my mother had in making us pray and become devotees of Our Lady and of some saints, began to waken me at the age of six or seven as it seems to me. Not to see anything else in my parents but what made for virtue, was a help to me. Virtues they had many. My father was a man of great charity towards the poor and compassion for the ailing,

and even for the servants, so much so that he could never suffer to have slaves, because he pitied them so greatly. And once when a woman-slave of his brother was staying in the house, he treated her as he did his children. In his compassion he said he could not bear to see that she was not free. He was of great truthfulness. Never did one hear him swear or murmur. He was very honest in a great manner.'

'Also my mother had many virtues and passed her life in constant ill-health. She was of the greatest honesty. Although she was of great beauty, it was never heard that there was any occasion for her to make much of it, for when she died at the age of 33 her dress was already as that of an aged person, who is very peaceful and of great understanding. The troubles she passed through during the time of her life were great. She died in a very Christian manner.'

'We were three sisters and nine brothers. All resembled their parents through the goodness of God in being virtuous, had it not been for me, although I was the most beloved of my father. And before I began offending God, he apparently had some reason for it, for I feel pity when I remember the good inclinations the Lord had given me and how little I knew how to make use of them. For my brothers and sisters in no way hindered me from serving God.'

Teresa's father was twice married. His first wife, Dona Catalina del Peso y Henao had given him three children. In 1509 Don Alonso married for the second time. His wife, Dona Beatriz de Ahumada was born in 1495. At the time of their marriage she was fourteen years old. Teresa was born when her mother was twenty. Dona Beatriz died in 1528 at Goterrendura, a village situated a few miles to the north of Avila. During her short life she bore nine children to Alonso. She was a self-sufficing woman. Though ailing all her life, she was of great piety. Her soul

longed for the romance of the beautiful and chivalrous. Teresa's literary talent can probably be traced to the influence of her mother who loved to read clandestinely romances of chivalry, which made her forget her ailing state to some extent. In those days domestic reading was composed alternately of the lives of the saints and pious legends and the romances of chivalry, and as a child Teresa felt the greatest enthusiasm for these marvellous stories and envied their heroes, real or imaginary paladins of religion and love and purity. She must have dreamed many an hour of the men and women peopling Amadis de Gaula, Sergas de Esplandian and others, and the contagion of their charm was so strong that she even attempted to write a novel of chivalric adventures long before she knew that God would one day choose her as one of His greatest and deepest writers, that the glory of the exploits of Amadis de Gaula would be effaced in her soul by the splendour of the Divine Adventure of man in his quest for ultimate fulfilment.

Both parents were of noble blood and well-to-do, though not very rich. Their sons, following the custom of the noble families, of the day, all went later to America where some of them died fighting.

Don Alonso Sanchez de Cepeda died like a saint. On his death-bed he expressed his regret not to have been a monk and this in one of the strictest Orders. The whole family, as it were, had the vocation of the cloister in their veins coupled with the passionate intensity of their race in all they did or tried to achieve.

From the day of her birth the young Teresa saw around herself convents, churches, friars and nuns, heard the ringing of the bells in the soft light of the evening calling the inhabitants of Avila to the holy offices and assisted at the processions of the Pasos through the streets with the realistic representations of the passion of the Lord

those coloured wooden Spanish sculptures which more than those of any other nation of that time bring us close to the horror and suffering of those who lived through them; for the Spanish artists through the passionateness and intensity of their soul had succeeded in producing statues so lifelike in the pain of their contorted limbs and anguish of expression of their faces that those who beheld them felt almost haunted by the spectacle and deeply realised the tragedy enacted in the days of Christ for them and for the whole of humanity.

There is no doubt that so strongly religious a surrounding enhanced by the sternness of Teresa's family-life greatly influenced her soul predisposed as it was for the highest emotions of piety and mysticism.

Nothing shows us the typical traits of her character so much as her longing for the crown of martyrdom as a child, about which she herself tells us in her *Life*.

She says, 'I had a brother of my age. Together we began reading the lives of the saints. I loved him most of all, although I cherished great love for them all and they for me. As I saw the tortures that the saints underwent for God, it seemed to me that they were paying a very cheap price for going and enjoying God, and I desired much to die in the same way. Not out of the love I bore them, but in order to enjoy shortly the great benefits which I read to be in heaven, and I considered with my brother what means there could be for that. We decided to go to the land of the Moors, begging for the love of God, so that they might behead us there. And it appears to me that the Lord would have given us courage even at so young an age, had we seen any means. To have parents appeared to us the greatest impediment. We were greatly thrilled by the words that pain and glory were for ever, in what we were reading. Often it happened to us to speak about that, and we loved saying many times:

"for ever, ever, ever!" By making me pronounce that many times the Lord was pleased to let the Way of Truth be imprinted in me in this childhood.'

And they really tried to execute their plan. They ran away from the house of their father and passed the little bridge spanning the Adaja in order to go 'down there' towards those high mysterious hills that to them seemed to hold the fulfilment of their wish. They were caught by one of their uncles and led back to their home where their mother appears to have given them a good scolding. The brother, in order to exculpate himself, said that it was the little girl who had led him away and made him take this road.

In this little adventure of her childhood Teresa can already be seen in her most typical trait, the passionate and sudden movement of her heart that could never be lukewarm and that swept before it all consideration of prudence and difficulties. ↗ 86? ↘

After the failure of her first heroic plan Teresa obstinately sought to realise her desire in some other way. She herself tells us, 'As soon as I saw that it was impossible to go where they would have killed us for we arranged to be hermits, and in a garden we had at the house, we tried as well as we could to build hermitages with small stones which always tumbled down again, and thus we did not find any satisfaction for our desire. Now it fills me with great devotion to see how God so early gave me what I later lost through my fault.'

After this second disappointment she played as nuns with her little friends as a substitute for the life of a martyr or a recluse in the desert which she had not been able to realise. She says, 'I loved very much, when I was playing with other girls to make convents as if we were nuns. And it seems to me that I desired to be one although not so intensely as the things I told you about.'

Her attitude at the death of her mother is also typical and clearly shows her deeply devotional nature. She writes, 'I remember that when my mother died I was twelve years old, a little less. (Here St. Teresa must be mistaken as she must have been 14, having been born in 1515 and her mother passing away in 1528.) When I began to understand what I had lost I went very sadly to an image of Our Lady and supplicated Her with many tears to be my mother. It seems to me, although I did this with simplicity, that it has helped me, for I clearly found this Virgin to be sovereign when I recommended myself to Her. At present it pains me to see and to think what the reason that I did not remain entirely in the good desires in which I began, was.'

There is a tradition that the image of the Virgin that the saint supplicated to be her mother was that of Our Lady of Charity who was then worshipped in the hermitage of San Lorenzo beside the Adaja, and that has since been removed to the Cathedral in the 19th century. It is said that when they went away to seek their martyrdom, Teresa and her brother Rodrigo recommended themselves to the same image before they set out on their adventure.

In order to commemorate these events in the life of the saint, every year on the 15th of October a procession is celebrated from the Cathedral to the Convent of the Discalced.

Even at the time when Teresa felt interest in this world and society, when she liked to dress herself beautifully, using plenty of perfume and took good care of her hands and her hair, her mind never thought of doing anything that might displease Christ. She was constantly preoccupied with his remembrance. There is a characteristic episode told by Dona Maria Pinel, nun of the Encarnacion, that she claims to have had from Dona Maria de Cepeda, Teresa's eldest sister, who served as mother to her when she became an orphan. This must have

happened between her 12th and 14th year.

One night when the two young girls came back from matins through the dark forbidding streets of Avila, Teresa suddenly in the middle of the darkness joyously exclaimed, 'Oh, sister, if you but know what a squire accompanies us, you would be enchanted!'

'Who then?' asked her sister.

'Our Lord Jesus Christ carrying His Cross.'

At that time she was devouring the romances of chivalry. And delighting in the adventures of Amadis de Gaula and other knights, she represents Christ to herself under the chivalrous traits of a squire who accompanies a lady, but a squire who carries a cross.

This may have been the imagination of a religious young girl, but it nevertheless clearly shows the pre-occupation of her thoughts and the all-absorbing interest she had for Christ even amid the distractions of her little harmless frivolities and worldly amusements. These, later on, seemed to her rigid sense of purity and spiritual aspiration almost deadly sins for which she would have to suffer and which she would have to expiate. At that time her attractiveness and charm must have been great, for Father Ribera, her earliest biographer says of her in his *Vida de Santa Teresa*, 'She had a good figure and was beautiful in her youth and even in old age of very good appearance.'

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**The Essential Unity of All Religions:** Compiled by Bhagavan Das, M.A., D. Litt. Published by the Kashi Vidyapith, Benares. Price Rs. 2/- Net Rs. 2-8-0 Post free. Pp. 683. 'Whoever helps to spread the knowledge of the Fact of the Essential Unity of All Religions...by purchasing, lending, presenting reprinting and distributing free or selling at cost-price copies of this work ...will earn the profound gratitude of the author and the publishers.'

The work is designed to meet the practical needs of the present-day humanity revelling in the orgy of mutual destruction. Along with the great minds that have illuminated this world enveloped in periodical obscurations caused by hatred and cruelty the present compiler, too, earnestly believes that true religion alone can bring better conditions to humanity. He therefore appeals and argues to add a fourth 'R' (religion) to the much cherished and widely advocated three 'R's. The benefits of religion are not so universally recognized today as that of 'reading, writing and arithmetic'. Besides, there is little dispute regarding either the methods of instructing in the latter triad, or its utility; but in respect of both these aspects religion has provoked questions. Leaving the noisy scientific dilettanti and unthinking fashion-

mongers who consider religion as an old superstition, there are many serious people who are realising the dilemma when different religions make rival claims, wage unholy wars in the name of God and peace. As the author points out, Islam insists on the belief in Alla, in Mohammed as His chief Prophet, in the revealed Koran, in the Day of judgment, in the omniscience of God, and in the practice of Namaz, Roza, Zakat, Haj, Jehad and the three festivals Id-ul-fitr, Id-uz-zohra, and Muhamarram; while the traditional Hindu considers essential belief in the Paramatman or Paramesvara, in His Avatars like Krishna, in the Vedas as God's words, in the judgment of Yama according to the laws of Karma and transmigration, and in the practice of Sandhya, Vrata, Upavasa, Dana, Tirthayatra, Varnashrama Dharma, and various festivals. In either case all these may be interpreted in a narrow, exclusive sense or in a broad intelligent way. 'If we see them with the eye of difference the stage is set for a mutual breaking of heads and feuds descending from century to century. But if we see them with the eye of agreement, which discerns the common features, the genera behind the particulars, clearly—then we have irresistible inducement for handshakings and embracings and

rejoicings of heart.' It is not difficult to see the unity in the two sets of essentials if they are reduced to general terms; namely, belief in the Supreme Being and highly advanced souls appearing as great teachers and lovers of mankind; in sacred scriptures embodying knowledge which is most helpful to mankind; in the law of cause and effect or action and reaction whereby sin unfailingly meets punishment and virtue reward in its own proper time; in the omniscience and impartial justice of the Supreme Being; in the practice of prayer, Self-denying restraint of the senses, especially the tongue, discriminate charity, and pilgrimage and travel in the spirit of reverence for all manifestations of God's Nature; in defence of right against wrong; in disciplines, festivals, public rejoicings and mournings for expression and promotion of fellow-feeling, and a rational social organization with a just division of the social labour, of the means of living, and of the prizes of life in accordance with the occupational temperaments of the different types of men as indicated by the principles of psychology. This is the attitude and approach which is taken in the present writer, and the wealth of interesting and useful material assembled here from the scriptures of the living faiths of the world are to be appreciated from this background. Social and political organizations can never bring peace and happiness without fellow-feeling and a sense of spiritual solidarity. These can be cultivated only through genuine religion. The author cautiously remarks that attempts to derive one religion from another by the proud adherents of the former should be avoided as it may arouse the feeling of the latter. 'Scholars who wish to study religions comparatively and historically,' says he, 'may of course do so for themselves, i.e., for their own refined recreation; and also for the enrichment of

scientific knowledge regarding human *psychical* evolution, even as biologists trace *physical* evolution. But controversial propaganda should be avoided, in the interests of peace'. This is certainly a very sane advice. Human unity is impossible so long as the various groups does not recognize the cultural and religious contributions of each and properly appreciate them. Arrogant claim of superiority or priority for the culture of one group naturally excites inferiority complex and opposition and division in the adherents of the other.

In spite of the formal drawbacks of this volume which the erudite compiler admits with great modesty in the beginning of the work, it is a unique publication in India. A glance through its pages would convince any unbiased reader that there is a central frame in all religions that is alike and akin. At a particular spiritual level human mind works similarly everywhere just as the atmospheric pressure is the same on any part of the surface of the earth at a given level. The phrases and extracts that are collected here along with the transliterated texts and English renderings of the originals make this fact sufficiently clear. The problems of religion are the same everywhere; the thought underlying the mystic expressions of the prophets and saints are everywhere the same. What is more interesting in the book is that Dr. Bhagawan Das has strung together these flowers of similar thoughts, varied and attractive in themselves, into a beautiful garland by the necessary connecting explanations with the help of his profound scholarship and understanding of man and society from the psychological, sociological, political and spiritual viewpoints. The work, a precious gift as it is for the very low price fixed for such a sumptuous volume, deserves to be on the table of every educated man and every library.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

In view of the present unsettled condition in the city our Publication Department is temporarily shifted to Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Chingleput. Friends and customers will kindly note that in spite of the change the same atten-

tion as before will be paid to their orders.

Correspondence may be addressed to the Manager, Publication Department, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Chingleput.

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**ENDS AND MEANS**

If we are to ask the Fuehrers, the Duces or the Imperialists what they are about, they are sure to puzzle us with the answer that they are out for the blessings of peace and a New order for the world. And these, they claim, will be ushered in by them through the slaughter and rapine of war. We gape at the strange nature of this claim and despair of the life of mankind in the hands of these 'peacemakers'. It is most unfortunate that they aim at reaching ends diametrically opposed to the means they employ and have launched themselves in a 'war to end war' a second time. This fallacy of 'opposing means and ends', of believing that desirable ends can be achieved by undesirable means has poisoned the springs of our thought and life and has brought about a wide-spread malady.

In the words of Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, 'we have desired for peace, but not the things that make for peace ; . . . we have desired art, but not the *scientia* without which *ars nihil*; we have desired morality, but have "thought for ourselves". It has become the besetting sin of our life to make use of bad means and look forward to good ends. We forget that even as it is only the right question that evokes the right answer, it is the good means that can elicit good ends. It is patent that our indifference to the quality of the means is the index to our unpreparedness to make the necessary sacrifice for assuring best results. As Sir Radhakrishnan aptly puts it, 'While resolved to renounce nothing, this generation wishes to enjoy the fruits of renunciation'. To enjoy the fruits of renunciation, all that we need renounce

is the primitive man within ; but to us that seems a great sacrifice. Until he is got rid of, our aspiration for real progress and good ends is like rowing the boat after having cast anchor. Real progress is progress in charity and charity begins where primitiveness ends. The primitive man is after infinite power and we have today so much of power without purpose. And the progression in the amassing of power has ominously synchronised with a regression in charity and the horrors of the century. Charity cannot progress towards universality and pave for desirable ends, unless the prevailing cosmology is either monotheistic or pantheistic, unless there is a general belief that all men are the sons of God or in the Indian phrase that 'thou art that', *tatvam asi*. The goal we desire to reach being "the ideal society of the prophets, a society of just, peaceable, morally and intellectually progressive community of non-attached and responsible individuals, the means we adopt therefore must be worthy of the ends.

Aldous Huxley contemplating the prospect of such worthy means writes, 'Among people who hold what are called "advanced opinions" there is a wide-spread belief that the ends we desire can best be achieved by mani-

pulating the structure of society. They advocate not a change of heart for the individuals, but carrying through a certain large-scale political and above all economic reforms'. But it will be found that both the change of heart and the large-scale reform are essential to bring in the ideal society we have in view. For without a change of heart, reforms political or economic scarcely ensure social integrity. No doubt large-scale manipulation of the social order which reforms bring on, can do much to preserve individuals from temptations. But they do not abolish evil ; they merely deflect it into other channels. If the ends we all desire are to be achieved, there must be more than deflection of evil. There must be suppression at the source in the individual will, culminating in a sublimation. This can come about only if there is a change of heart which is in effect a return to religion. And with such a change of heart one gains the correct attitude to Reality which inculcates and develops a philosophy benign and helpful to life.

That a change of heart described above and the progressive suppression and eradication of the primitive tendencies in man

—which are the fundamental evil in him—are a supreme necessity to the normal life and progress of human society is testified to by recent history. The lust for power and possession parading in noble garbs in the Duces and Fuehrers is nothing but this unchecked evil of the individual will expressing itself once again in ways that are almost medieval. In the Fascist states, we witness a return not to religion but to the rule of the sword and by divine right. The more we see the course of world events these days the more have we reason to despair of the fate of civilization if the spiritual conversion of man remains unachieved.

In the absence of such a conversion man continues to believe in the efficacy of bad means obtaining best results. It is only a spiritual attitude brought on by a change of heart and a return to religion that can think in terms of perfecting the means and making the required sacrifice for chastening them. In the west even advanced thinkers have betrayed that they are incapable of this attitude. Harold Laski for instance, is led into a serious error of thought. 'It is patent' he writes, 'that

without the iron dictatorship of the Jacobins,<sup>1</sup> the Republic would have been destroyed.' 'But' says Aldous Huxley, in a significant retort, 'it was precisely because of the iron dictatorship of the Jacobins, that the Republic was destroyed.' That the means must determine the ends is the inexorable law of nature.

Jacobinism gave rise to two significant facts : One was the destruction of the Republic and the other, the futile waste and slaughter of the Napoleonic wars, the perpetual imposition of military slavery or conscription, and the birth of those nationalistic idolatries which threaten the life of Western and Eastern civilization today. In the first quarter of the present century the long-drawn violence of the Tsarist oppression and the catastrophic violence of the world-war produced the iron dictatorships of the Bolsheviks. The threat of world-wide revolutionary violence begot Fascism ; Fascism produced rearmament. And rearmament has entailed the progressive de-liberalization of the democratic countries. To crown all, we see today how the defence of democracy against Fascism has ended in the

<sup>1</sup> A Jacobin is a member of the extreme democratic club established in Paris in 1799.

transformation of democracy into Fascism.

We have traced the above events to show how environmental forces, political or social, fan the flames of man's cupidity and other base appetites and bring about menacing conditions. The root cause of the malady is no doubt man's primitive propensities, but social circumstance make and unmake the ends to a considerable degree. Societies can be ordered in such a way as to offer every kind of support and encouragement to whomsoever that seeks for the suppression of evil and for spiritual freedom. This forces the conclusion—which is but the reiteration of the formula we have started with—that a change of heart which entails a spiritual conversion, and a social structure which helps and hastens this conversion are the means for our desired end. It is important to remember here that while Eastern societies (especially Indian) are ordered with a view to help man's spiritual unfoldment, western civilization places almost insurmountable obstacles in the way of those whose concern is with anything other than 'facts' of science. In the west the prevail-

ing cosmology is what Gerald Heard has called the 'mechanomorphic' cosmology of modern science. The universe is regarded as a great machine pointlessly grinding its way towards ultimate stagnation and death. The pointlessness of modern life in the west in time of peace and its lack of significance and purpose must be traced to this cosmology. In sharp contrast to this, is the Indian cosmology which invests life with a divine purpose and views it as a pilgrimage to perfection. This contrast makes us feel that until man comes to the inculcation of a cosmology more nearly corresponding to Reality than either to mechanomorphism or the grotesque philosophies underlying the nationalistic and communistic idolatries, civilization is not worth saving. For the tragedy will only move on.

Which social pattern then shall we chose to ensure immunity from war and civil violence? To the Indian mind the answer is clear. The choice lies in the type of the Aryan social structure with its four clear-cut orders, the *chaturvarnya*.<sup>1</sup> The four orders were created by the old Indian sages according to the divisions of the *gunas* (personal

<sup>1</sup> It may be recalled that the existing caste system is but the order of the *chaturvarna* in a state of deliquescence.

bent of individuals) and works. By virtue of certain individual endowments one may be able to do a job better than any other and the assignment of works in the old Indian community was such that it developed this individual character of the man, his *swabhava*. *Swabhava* thus determined one's *swadharma* or function in society. *Swabhava* becomes the pivot on which both the internal and social life of the individual turned. As *swabhava* is the core of man's being, the latent divinity in him, his ultimate fulfilment lay in the full development and manifestation of this divinity and hence it became his paramount duty to nourish his *swabhava* by feeding it with the most efficient discharge of his *swadharma* in society. Thus the constitution of the Aryan society paved for two ends simultaneously: the spiritual freedom of the individual and along with that the welfare of society or the world. The merit of the system lay in the positive method it employed for the extirpation of man's evil. It aided the process of a spontaneous growth of one's divinity from within, a growth which had its concomitant and inevitable social aspect of constructing social solidarity through the efficient discharge of the *swadharma*.

'Such is our ideal of caste' (meaning *chaturvarna*) says Swami Vivekananda, 'as meant for raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realization of that great ideal of the spiritual man, who is non-resisting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure and meditative.' \* \* 'I have seen castes', continues the Swami, 'in almost every country in the world, but nowhere is their plan and purpose so glorious as here.' This is no cultural narcissism but a correct assessment of one of India's great traditional institutions, based on a comparative study. The Swami, as the true Indian that he is, makes his choice: 'If caste is thus unavoidable I would rather have a caste of purity and culture and self-sacrifice, than a caste of dollars'. And he holds out the Indian social order for universal acceptance as the one panacea for all present ills: 'The command is the same to you all, that you must progress without stopping and that from the highest man to the lowest Pariah everyone in this country has to try and become the ideal Brahman. This Vedantic idea is applicable not only here, but over the whole world'.

When the antipathy of the western mind for such teaching is so much in evidence, it is

heartening to see the more level-headed and non-attached amongst the western thinkers like Aldous Huxley discussing the desirability of the west accepting the Indian social pattern. 'Nor even if it were possible' asks he, 'would it be desirable that we should choose these Indian societies as our model? Is it possible for us to acquire their admirable habits of non-attachment to wealth and personal success.....?' As a matter of historical fact, scientific progressiveness has never been divorced from aggressiveness. Does this mean that they can never be divorced? Not necessarily.' The history of the old Indian social order will amply testify that scientific advance can be divorced from aggressiveness. There had been for India days of marked scientific progress accompanied by material prosperity; but India was never a conquering nation. The *chaturvarna* had also a commercial aspect which was not less significant than the spiritual. The *Vaishya* and *Sudra* orders functioned as efficient craft and trade guilds and the finished products of their artisans were in olden days the pride of India's industrial skill in foreign markets. In those days India's spiritual and material life

advanced *pari passu*. Moreover when India became the mother to many sciences it was not at the expense of her spirituality. These facts must meet the objections raised above by Huxley and adequately qualify the Indian social pattern for acceptance by the west.

We don't make secret of the fact that today things have taken a turn for the worse in India. Competition, cruel, cold and heartless which is the law of Europe has invaded our congenitally non-competitive social orders turning them into competitive ones. It has brought about a chaos of castes, *Varnasamkara*, and degradation has set in. The Brahman shopkeeper and wine-distiller are a common sight in India today. So the home of this social order stands in need of readjustment.

To sum up: A change of heart which in effect means a return to religion and a social order that offers all support for man's spiritual development have been found to be the desiderata for good and beneficent ends, for the ideal society of the prophets. And of the two, the need for man's conversion is deeper. 'Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' 'It would be harder for us, such as we are in

ourselves at the present day by temperament and training to enter the kingdom of heaven than for the camel to pass through the eye of the needle.' Hence the task before us is that of 're-minding the modern man, who has forgotten who he is; that he is more than an animal, reasoning and mortal'. But where there is a recognition of man's inherent divinity the conversion must come sooner or later. And when a sympathetic social setting promotes this recognition, as is the case in the old Indian social order, the conversion is assured and hastened and the task before us well-nigh accomplished. These considerations must convince anyone of the desirability of choosing the Indian social pattern as the means that assure the desirable end we pursue.

It is a promising sign that the type of society which some of the more progressive western thinkers intend to substitute for the present one, is in essence, though not in design, a very near approximation to the Indian social pattern. This not only confirms the soundness of our choice, but shows how far the West will look up to India for light and guidance when the New Order will come to be built.

We cannot hope to offer this light and guidance before we put our own house in order, before we purge our society of its vagaries and restore to it its pristine purity and efficiency. The old system has broken down everywhere giving room to a more fluid order in some places and to a confused and complex social rigidity elsewhere. The main part of reconstruction lies in raising the lowest to the level of the highest, perfect man, the Brahmana. To achieve this the religion of service and sacrifice has to be applied to society. The masses have to be raised. The unnumbered millions whom we have neglected for ages and for whom we have invented the doctrine *lokachara* must be raised, must be given back their lost individuality. For this, the first thing to do is to educate them, is to give them man-making education, is to make them full-fledged citizens of the State. The New Awakening, that is in unmistakable evidence in India today is a move in this direction and is wedded above all things, to a programme of national and social reconstruction of the type referred to above. It behoves everyone of us as children of India to contribute our quota to this new move-

ment and strengthen this new surge of life which comes from the heart of the Mother's genius and which is destined to cure

her of her ills and restore her to her original health. By so doing we fulfil ourselves and pave for Freedom and fulfilment.

## THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

*By Dr. Satischandra Chatterjee, M.A. Ph.D.,*

### I

With regard to the nature certain philosophers, especially of knowledge, a distinction should be made between its essential and functional characters, or what is the same thing, between its metaphysical and its empirical nature. Metaphysically speaking, a thing is what it *is* in itself, apart from and independent of its relation to other things. Empirically speaking, however, a thing is what it *does* or how it affects other things. For a thing to act, means to come into relation to other things affected by its action. The relations in which one thing stands to other things are either its actions on those things or the expressions of their actions on us. Hence we may say that from the empirical standpoint we consider the nature of a thing as related to other things, while from the metaphysical, we try to know what the thing is in itself, apart from its relation to other things. It has, of course, been held by the empiricists, that a thing is what it does, or that a thing is constituted by its relations to other things. Apart from the other difficulties in which such a view is involved, it is plain that it makes a confusion between *being* and *doing*, essence and action. To *be* is not to *do*, or to exist is not always to act. If it were so, we should have said that there is no air in a closed room because it does not blow, that there is no water in a river because it does not flow and that a man ceases to exist when he sleeps soundly. Since, however, neither ordinary language nor logical analysis allows such expressions, we ought to make a distinction between the existence and action of a thing and hold that it may be considered in respect of both. In the case of knowledge also we propose to make a similar distinction and study its metaphysical and empirical nature.

It may be objected here that 'flowing' respectively. For a while the distinction between current to be is to do, to exist is essence and function may hold good in the case of a thing or a substance, it is misleading in the case of that which is no thing but a mere function of something. Not only the older empiricists and materialists but even some modern realists, not to speak of the behaviourists, regard mind, consciousness and knowledge as mere functions of the brain or the nervous system. If they are right, then with regard to knowledge no distinction can be made between essence and function, between existence and action. We shall hereafter consider more fully the question whether knowledge is a function of the body or the brain or the nervous system. Here we may just point out that a distinction between essence and function holds good in the case of anything that has being, while it is not acting or functioning. It does not matter much whether we call it a thing or substance, quality or relation, activity or function. A *current* of water or electricity has no being apart from what it is doing or its flowing. Although the exigencies of language make it incumbent on us to refer to the current by using the pronouns 'it' and 'its', yet we are convinced that we may and usually do use the they mean just 'doing' and word 'knowledge' in the sense

is to act or flow. Hence with regard to a current no distinction is ordinarily made between its essence and function. When, however, we treat the water or electric current as a persistent or enduring fact and contrast it with its varying effects like forming gravels, lighting lamps etc. we may make a distinction, between the current and its functions. But while the current of water has no being apart from its function, water itself is a material substance which has being even when it is not functioning in this or that way. Water exists even when it does not flow or quench anybody's thirst. Hence with regard to water there is no impropriety in asking the questions what it is in itself and what it does or how it acts in relation to other things. Similar is the case with knowledge. Knowledge has being even when it is not functioning or knowing anything. It may seem paradoxical to say that there may be knowledge which knows nothing. Since, however, knowledge as mere sentience or pure consciousness is not only a logical possibility but a psychical fact admitted by many older and modern thinkers,

of a conscious essence or existence which may *be*, even when it *does* nothing by way of cognising objects. The concept of 'pure experience' adumbrated by William James in his *Essays in Radical Empiricism* fairly represents knowledge in this sense, although he himself does not so use it. Some modern psychologists speak of an objectless thought and others of a subjectless cognition. If there can be such a thing as bare experience without any reference to a subject or an object, then it would give us what we call the essential nature of knowledge. With this essential nature of its own, knowledge may function in different ways in relation to different objects. It is true that this essential nature of knowledge is generally described as consciousness or mind or self, of which knowledge in the ordinary sense is said to be a quality or function. As it will appear in the sequel, we are fully prepared to accept this description of knowledge as pure consciousness, mind or self. But what we want to emphasize here is that knowledge has this essential nature which should be neither ignored nor confused with its functional character in a philosophical study. Even in deep dreamless sleep a man knows or experiences the state

of sleep, although he is not aware of any object. How otherwise are we to explain the subsequent memory of what takes place during sound sleep, as that is clearly attested by judgments like 'I slept well', 'I knew nothing', which one passes on waking from deep sleep? Hence with regard to knowledge the distinction between its essence and function is not only permissible but also indispensable. There has been such confusion in the study of the problems of knowledge because some philosophers have lost sight of this important distinction.

Keeping in view the above distinction we shall first consider knowledge in its empirical character and then proceed to discuss its metaphysical nature. Knowledge in its empirical character may be considered from the standpoint of psychology or of logic. Viewed from the psychological standpoint and considered empirically, i. e. in the light of what it does, knowledge may be defined as the awareness or apprehension of objects. The object of knowledge may be a thing or a quality, a mental state or a physical entity, the existent as well as the non-existent. In every case in which there is knowledge there must be something which stands out as its object, and it

consists simply in the manifestation of the object. All things are made manifest or revealed to us when they become objects of knowledge. Knowledge may also be regarded as the ground of all intelligent activity. It is on the basis of knowledge of some kind that all living beings deal with other objects of the surrounding world. A living creature behaves differently in relation to different objects because it somehow knows them to be different.

Knowledge as the apprehension of objects is different from feeling or affection and volition. While the latter two mental states relate to some object or other, they are not related to it by way of knowledge. Something different is meant when one says '*I know a thing*', from what is meant by saying, '*I desire or will or do something, or am simply pleased or displeased with it*'. Although knowledge is distinguishable, it is not separable from feeling and volition. Knowledge is a cognitive process by which we have an apprehension or understanding of objects. But it is bound up with certain affective elements, namely, the feelings of pleasure and displeasure, according as the known objects are pleasurable or painful. Through such feelings knowledge leads to certain conations, viz. desire, aversion,

and volition in the form of an exertion to obtain pleasurable objects and avoid painful ones. Hence knowledge may be said to be a cognitive phenomenon which is always connected with conation through the mediation of feeling. Along with the knowledge of an object there is a feeling of being pleased or displeased with it and an active attitude of desire or aversion which may lead to certain overt movements towards or away from the object. Still knowledge is not, as some psychologists believe, at once a phase of cognition, feeling and conation. In cognising an object we may also *cognise* its pleasurable or painful character and also become *conscious* of certain tendencies in relation to it. But the actual feelings of pleasure and pain or the conative processes of desire, etc., take us beyond cognition, although they may arise out of cognition. Knowledge is not, and does not contain within itself, a phase of feeling or the will, although it may be always connected with them. Even as an empirical phenomenon it has a distinctive and self-sufficient character of its own and should not be reduced to or confused with feeling or volition.

From the psychological standpoint we have defined knowledge as the apprehension or cognition

of objects, whether right or wrong. As such, knowledge includes all cognitive states and processes of the mind, like sensation, perception, memory, imagination, inference, doubt, dream, illusion, etc. It stands, as the late Professor Alexander also has said, 'for all kinds of apprehension of objects, whether sensation, or thought, or memory, or imagination, or any other'.<sup>1</sup> In psychology knowledge is understood in a wide sense so as to comprise both true and false perception, inference, memory, etc., as well as dream and doubt. Psychology as a positive science of mental phenomena is not so much concerned with the truth or falsity of cognitions as with their description, analysis, and explanation. Hence all cognitive facts are regarded as instances of knowledge, no matter whether they are true or false, or neither true nor false. A true or veridical perception is as much a case of knowledge as a false or erroneous one. Illusions, hallucinations and dreams also are cases of knowledge since we have in them different kinds of apprehension of objects, although their objects being unreal, they are classed as invalid or erroneous perceptions. That illusion and hallucination are cases of wrong perception is generally admitted by psychologists. But

with regard to dream there is some difference of opinion among philosophers, and some hold that dream is a kind of false *memory*, while others maintain that it is more like perception than memory or inference, and so must be regarded as a form of erroneous perception. While we prefer the second view, we should make it plain that as a form of erroneous perception dream is different from illusion and hallucination. It stands midway between perception and memory, but is more akin to the former than the latter. Dream is a sort of creative perception in which the dreamer creates a world of objects which resemble in many respects the objects of our waking experience and are considered by the dreamer to be as real as the latter. Since, however, dreams have not the regularity and orderliness of our waking perceptions and are subsequently contradicted by our waking experiences, we eventually reject them as false and fanciful cognitions. Doubt is like dream, a form of knowledge. It is rather unusual to speak of doubt as a kind of knowledge. But when we remember that by knowledge we here mean any way of cognising objects, and that doubtful cognition is cognition none the less, and not feeling or conation, we seem to be

1. Cf. Space, Time and Deity, Vol. II, p. 82.

justified in bringing it under knowledge. Doubt is not merely the absence of assured cognition or conviction. It is not the mere negation of knowledge. It is a positive state of the cognition of mutually exclusive characters in the same thing and at the same time. To doubt is to entertain conflicting notions with regard to the same object and refer two or more contrary or contradictory properties to it in alternation. In it the mind oscillates between different alternate characterisations of some given object. As a mental state doubt is different from both belief and disbelief. It neither affirms nor denies anything, but only raises a problem for thought. As such, doubt should be distinguished from 'the mere absence of belief'. There is absence of belief even when we do not think of anything at all. In doubt, however, we think of two or more alternatives in regard to the same thing. Professor Bosanquet goes so far as to say that 'a definite doubt is unquestionably a disjunctive judgment'. But it is doubtful whether doubt as a wavering attitude of the mind can be regarded as a definite cognition or judgment at all. Rather, it is an indecisive questioning attitude of the mind towards an object. It is not a judgment at all. It does

not assert anything definitely with regard to its object. When we are in doubt about anything we do not know, nor do we claim to know, what it really is. We cannot even say that 'it must be either this or that'. All that we can say is : 'Is it this or that?'. It is for this reason that doubt is neither true nor false, but only non-valid cognition. It is not valid because the oscillation of thought in doubt has no objective counterpart in reality. It is not false or invalid because it makes no definite assertion about its object and cannot, therefore, be contradicted by it. Hence as a form of wavering cognition it is to be regarded as logically neutral, i. e., neither true nor false.

While from the psychological standpoint knowledge is taken to mean any cognition of objects, from the logical it means true and only true cognitions of objects, attended with the conviction that they are true. In logic as also in philosophy, knowledge is understood in a narrow sense and is limited to the definite and assured cognition of an object, which is also true. It is said that knowledge, in the strict sense, means a sure belief that carries with it an assurance of its truth. As Mr. Russell puts it, 'what we

firmly believe, if it is true, is called *knowledge*.<sup>2</sup> It follows that knowledge has at least two characteristics. It must be an *assured* cognition of, or a firm belief in something. It is thus distinguished from all indefinite, problematic and hypothetical cognitions. But knowledge is not merely a matter of subjective certainty. While we are in illusion, we firmly believe in what is false. Hence the second characteristic of knowledge is that it must be *true* cognition of objects. A cognition is true when it agrees with or corresponds to its objects. That is, a cognition is true when it represents its object with that nature and character which really belong to it. Thus to know a thing is, strictly speaking, to cognise it as characterised by what is a characteristic of it, with the conviction that it is so cognised. A man may have a true cognition of some thing without his knowing or believing that it is true. In that case, he cannot be said to have a knowledge of the thing. In addition to these two characters, some philosophers admit some other characters as belonging to all knowledge in the proper sense. Thus some thinkers, like the Naiyayikas, would say that

knowledge is not only a matter of true and firm belief or cognition, but also a *presentative* or *intuitive* experience (*anubhava*) of some object. According to them, true perception, inference, comparison, (*upamana*) and testimony (*sabda*) are the only four different kinds of knowledge in the logical sense. If there be other kinds of knowledge over and above these, we are to take it that they are either reducible to these four or not valid knowledge at all. Wrong perception, inference, etc., are obviously excluded from valid knowledge. So also are doubt, dream and memory. Doubt is not a form of valid knowledge because it is uncharacterisable as true or false. Probable opinion and hypothetical argument cannot be treated as knowledge because they do not give us certain information about things and events, although they may sometimes turn out to be true. Dream, like illusion, is not knowledge because it not only is, but must always be, false. The objects we dream of are perceived as present before our senses, while they are really past and distant. Dream must be a false cognition because it represents the not-present as the present, the 'that' as the 'this'. Sometimes dreams

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Problems of Philosophy* p. 217.

come true and are corroborated by the subsequent experiences of waking life. But even such correspondence between dream-cognitions and waking experience is neither normal nor invariable. Memory, which is generally regarded as a true knowledge of the past, has been rejected by some Indian thinkers as non-valid knowledge. The reason for this is that memory does not give us any direct or at least presentative knowledge of the past. Memory may be true or false, according as it does or does not alter the order and character of the remembered objects. But even true memory cannot be regarded as knowledge in the strict sense, since it is not a presentation but a representation of past objects. Some other philosophers, like the Mimamsakas, mention another characteristic as logically understood. They maintain that knowledge must not only be a true and assured cognition, but also a *new* experience. It must give us new information about the world of objects. Every case of knowledge, if it is to be of any

value, should be original in character. It implies a new step by which we advance from the known to what is not yet known. Real knowledge is a synthetic process adding new contents to the old stock of our knowledge of objects. If the objects are already known, there can be no necessity of acquiring a knowledge of them. Hence knowledge must relate to such objects as have not been previously known. It follows that memory cannot be true knowledge, in so far as it is not a new experience, but the reproduction of some old experience. Whether memory can or cannot be regarded as a form of knowledge in the strict sense is a question on which philosophers hold conflicting opinions. We shall consider this question fully on a future occasion. Here we may just say that memory lacks none of the characteristics of true knowledge mentioned here, and, as such, there is no reason why it should not be accepted as a form of knowledge in the logical sense.

(To be concluded.)

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## SANKARA : A NON-INTELLECTUALIST

*By Anil Kumar Sarkar, M. A.,*

Sankara's view of reality has often been misunderstood. The general view is that his conception of reality is too harsh and high for common men. In a sense the objection so raised has truth. But if the human mind is after the final solution of its problems, it should not be scared away by its up-hill task ahead. The conception of reality of almost all great thinkers are harsh because of their radicalism of thought. It is the consciousness of the spirit of reality that makes them so radical in their views. If we thoroughly examine Sankara's philosophy, we shall find that inspite of his most radical attitude so far as the solution of the ultimate problem of reality is concerned, he is most considerate in his empirical view of it. He had two ways of looking at reality. One is that of the lovers of the ultimate solution of the problem, and the other is of the ordinary man. Interpreters of his philosophy often mistake one view for the other and thereby bring in confusion without solving anything. But really he is a very liberal teacher recommend-

ing two sorts of views to satisfy two types of men.

Sankara is a follower of the Upanishadic ideal and considers Brahman as the final reality. For him Brahman or the Atman (self) are one and non-different. The idea of non-difference as pointed out by him, is not intellectual but intuitional. It would be more accurate to say that the final reality is an experience or intuition—it is Brahman or Atman. This 'oneness' cannot be experienced in an intellectual way by those whose way of experiencing is fundamentally different from the way of intuition. Intellectual understanding is categorical understanding. It distinguishes between subject and object. It is therefore *relational*, and all relational understanding is based on the sense of *difference*. But Sankara who only believes in 'oneness', cannot admit of difference in any sense, and hence his non-intellectualistic attitude.

This non-intellectualistic attitude should be distinguished from anti-intellectualism as found in the contemporary European and American thinkers viz., Bergson and Bradley,

James and Dewey. All these thinkers are in revolt against our intellectual way of understanding reality. They point to intuition. Bergson holds that our intellectual way of understanding is defective by its very nature. He says that the intellectual approach cannot understand life or flux or reality as it dissects reality. How can the pure stream of consciousness be so broken and known in piecemeal ? James in his *Pragmatism* and *A Pluralistic Universe* harps on the same string. Dewey follows suit. Bradley feeling the congenital incapacity of the intellectual or categorical way of understanding reality, puts his entire metaphysical thought in the form of ' Appearance ' and ' Reality '. He shows that the intellectual categories are all riddled with contradictions, for they always go in pairs, and the thought of the one is locked in the other without giving any knowledge of any of them. So also Hegel's conception of the conceptual Absolute must be abandoned as fraught with ' bloodless categories '. But Sankara is not an anti-intellectualist of that type. He is rather a non-intellectualist than an anti-intellectualist. As they point out their reasons for anti-intellectualism, San-

kara shows his reasons for non-intellectualism ; but while they ask us to avoid the world as a delusion, Sankara definitely points out that his non-intellectualist position is not to deny the universe so revealed to our intellect but to seek an interpretation of the world so appearing before us. His metaphysics is thus a liberal explanation of the facts of experience. Very rationally he admits of the world of appearance (*Vyavaharika Jagat*), and says that this world is more real than the dream experiences (*pratibhasika satta*). Here he is a realist and a psychologist too. Again he thinks that the world should be taken as real on a pragmatic ground, for until the final consciousness dawns in the man, no amount of reason will convince him to abandon it. (*abrahma saksat Jagat satyam*).

Thus viewed he is not one who would deny the reality of the apparent world, but one who would deny only its ultimate reality. The denial of the ultimate reality of the world of appearance, does not mean the denial of its temporal existence. One would surely be a fool to deny it. He, therefore, admits the truth of the common experience. His admission of the world as ' serpent ' appearing

before us due to ignorance, will become clear on this explanation; but that does not mean that we should suspend all action and activity thinking that the world as presented is not ultimately real. This would be misinterpreting him. Those who are attached to the world, will have a very liberal interpretation of his philosophy which would satisfy them. For them Brahman is the ultimate reality, Maya the force of God, and the world-appearance is due to Maya or the magical power of God. This Maya has the power of veiling reality and projecting it as the world. The individual soul is nothing but the expression of this Maya. Being a creature of Maya or Maya itself (*avidya*), it is not getting the full experience of self or Atman. When true knowledge will dawn in a man he will have a vision of Atman or Brahman. In this interpretation the realism of the world is perfectly preserved. The world-appearance is a Maya but it is the magical force of God, the wielder of Maya. So everything becomes real. Sankara there shows his belief in the law of Karma and the fact of liberation or *Moksha* that can be attained through knowledge. This liberal philosophy contains only flashes of

the ultimate truth. It attempts to interpret Vivartavada (transformation in appearance) in a very simple manner so that man with his intellectual way of understanding, can grasp the significance of it. So we find that lest the common mind be shocked with the revelation of the ultimate truth, Sankara is trying to be as liberal as possible without being harshly critical. And while maintaining the virtual philosophic position, he bears the final liberalism of thought by taking for granted the world of appearance as an unavoidable assumption which even the philosophic mind cannot abandon. The world is neither real nor unreal. Its character is peculiar, so it is to be admitted. The world is *Anirvachaniya* or ineffable for him. This admission is a frailty and a strength of the mind. It is a frailty, as the mind's incapacity to stand on ultimate experience is admitted; it is a strength for it frankly owns the weakness of the human mind. Sankara cannot be blamed for this single admission in the face of several assumptions or acknowledgments felt necessary by the contemporary thinkers to construct their philosophy of Emergent Evolution or Creative Evolution. L. Morgan has to admit three such

acknowledgments to construct his philosophy of Emergent Evolution. They are God who is the directive principle, the universal principle of psycho-physical correlation, and the ultimate Matrix of Space-Time. Whitehead admits God, the principle of concretion, as a metaphysical demand, as the demand of our reason, in his *Creative Evolution*. Boodin admits besides his Divine Matrix or Field of God, the five-fold reality of energy, space, time, consciousness and form.

In view of the above admissions on the part of eminent contemporary thinkers, we should not be so unsympathetic to Sankara on his view of reality and the world. Sir Radhakrishnan, considers this the chief strength of Sankara's philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Therefore we conclude that Sankara's position is not anti-intellectualistic or a denial of the world of appearance or its interpretation from the standpoint of the intellectualist. It is a non-intellectualistic attitude, aiming at giving a right interpretation to the world of appearance from the standpoint of the ultimate experience which is taken as the ultimate ground or basis of all explanation.

His stand on non-intellectual

ground, rests on the fundamental thought which is necessary for grasping the non-relational one, or the ultimate reality. It is the intuition which grasps the non-relational one—which is 'an experience', and a final experience, an experience which is all-complete, all full and infinite—a pure consciousness of *oneness*. \*

To understand the 'non-relational one' of Sankara, we shall have to give up all our attachment for intellectual craving of understanding reality. The craving itself shuts out all knowledge of reality. Craving plunges us in the sense of relation and difference. The moment we attempt to grasp reality by distinguishing 'us' from our 'knowledge' of it, we take a wrong step, for that is the intellectual way. The intuitional way is the abandonment of the idea of knowing reality *objectively*. It is the process of *identification* with the cosmic experience, the foundational consciousness. The moment we seek to grasp it, we cut or dissect it and thus fail to grasp it. To demand its objectivity is to demand its existence, and it is all intellectual craving, and must, therefore be abandoned. From this we can take a

further step and should abandon as false the position that 'because the world exists it should be taken as real'. The world cannot be held as real because it exists. The character of existence cannot confer on the world reality, for existence is of the nature of finitude and unreality. But the whole puzzle is that there is such a thing as 'existence' or 'finitude', viz., the world of parts or relations. Sankara, therefore, without denying it, wants to account for it.

To be more clear, the chief philosophic problem is one of explanation of the world of appearance and not craving for a false attachment for it, based on the mere fact of its existence. That is only the weakness of the mind. How can two things be real? Reality is the foundational ground and not those that appear to exist on it. It may be held, as the contemporary thinkers hold, that the ultimate reality is flux or creative process, but Sankara cannot admit that as final, for that would give us the ideal of a flowing or vanishing reality or reality depending on the flux to direct it. So the belief in the directive principle as directing the flux, is the admission of a veiled dualism, and it can give us no idea of

reality. The very conception of flowing reality is faulty, for none knows wherefrom it comes and whither it goes. Even taking that to be eternal, the fact of passage gives an opposite idea of eternity. How can temporality or *vanishing* be eternity? So the dualistic character of the final cannot be granted; it is essentially 'one', Presence and not Process or Directive Principle. The Creative Goal is a 'waiting concern' and gives no satisfaction, for the satisfaction itself is in process of realisation in the final goal or 'subjective form'. Sankara cannot admit such a 'deficiently actual reality.' For him any sense of activity is a relative conception, for that cannot be held without the conception of relation and difference. To admit that would be to admit 'dualism' or 'pluralism' which gives us no ultimate solution, and reality passes into non-reality. So the intellectualistic way is defective to its very core. So far Sankara is one with the contemporary thinkers like Bergson, Bradley and others. But he is not one with them in the denial of the world as it is; rather he intends to explain the world-appearance which is only interpretable by the foundational consciousness, Brahman or Atman.

The conception of the ultimate reality is, therefore, not intellectual in any sense. It is not a relative conception invoking any form of dualism; it is not the conception of a whole or a total of parts; it is the One Presence non-relationally understood as revealed to intuition. And intuition is one with and non-different from intellect or intellectual experience. Intuition is the ground of intellectual experience and craving for the latter is the child of our *avidya* or ignorance. Neither the intellectual grasp nor the intellectual interpretation of reality can give the idea of reality; that idea is purely intuitional far above the intellectual grasp. The notion of reality, which is the product of intuition, must be rendered completely free from the notion of 'existence' which is not the character of reality but the very germ of all finalistic conception. Without abandoning this kind of an intellectual demand the non-intellectual position of Sankara can never be grasped. At this stage the denial of the universe becomes a small thing. The Maya-theory, the belief in God, Karma, *Moksha* all are denied, for the belief in them, will again invite the old intellectual problem which may

solace the weak-minded but not the strong, who are after the realization of the real nature of reality.

Once again we may give our concluding remarks after Sankara that the intellectual conception of reality cannot give any explanation of reality, for its chief defect lies in giving all things the 'character of existence' which may have 'empirical reality' but not absolute or ultimate reality. Viewed thus Sankara's philosophy is really non-dualism, not in the intellectual sense, but understood in a non-intellectual way. It hints at the intuitional way of understanding reality for that alone can give real solution to philosophic problems. The theory of Maya or Karma or *Vivartavada* are all introduced in a general way and are secondary, but the chief hint is at the grasp of the non-intellectual or intuitional position. Sankara's philosophy neither advocates any theory nor builds a system in particular for that would be an invitation to intellectualism and criticism.

[Editorial Note : Sankara by his exposition of the Advaita philosophy sought to establish the non-duality of the ultimate Reality, that Brahman is the only real thing. To this end, he had to build his thesis on foundations strong enough to meet the challenge of

other schools of thought. This naturally entailed his thesis becoming a system, and a thoroughly intellectual one at that, Sankara being an outstanding intellectual. Nevertheless the Advaitic Reality which Sankara was out to vindicate was not to be intellectually comprehended. It had to be experienced; it was experience, *anubhava* itself. Hence the approach to this Reality had to be non-intellec-

tualistic; rather it had to be intuitive. This is the author's thesis in the above article. A distinction has to be made between the terms, intellectual and intellectualist. Sankara was no doubt a great intellectual; but his approach to Reality was non-intellectualistic, because to him Reality was non-relational, free from subject-object relationship. Eds.]

## SAINT TERESA OF JESUS

*By Wolfram H. Koch*

### II

At the age of seventeen Teresa went to the convent of Nuestra Senora de la Gracia of the Augustinians as a boarder. This convent still exists dominating the valley and the river with a fine view over the Castilian Sierras. Probably she was sent there to be guarded safely from worldly distractions and influences and from a rather harmless flirtation with one of her cousins. After a period of great depression she began to enjoy her stay, which was above all, due to the calm she found after the noisy company in her father's house. Here at least she was able to collect herself and to be alone, for ever since her earliest childhood solitude had had a great charm for her, and especially in prayer and meditation she used to isolate

herself as much as possible from her companions. Here also Teresa met a nun, Maria Briceno, who intuitively realised the deep spiritual yearning of the girl and kindled in her soul consciously the desire for eternal values. Teresa very touchingly tells us of her, 'She began to give me back the desire for the eternal things'; though at this time she was not yet prepared to take the veil and even found the rule of the Augustinians too strict for her inspite of her great admiration for the saintliness of life of the inmates of the convent.

After a period of terrible struggles and indecision and illness she finally resolved to profess in the Carmelite convent of the Encarnacion, before having reached the age of twenty. During this period of

uncertainty and wavering one of her uncles, an experienced man of great virtues who himself became a monk towards the end of his life, taught her the contempt of the world and of all its glamour and tinsel grandeur. Under the strict seclusion of the conventional life her health, however, soon again broke down completely, so that she had to go home for treatment and greater comfort. Teresa entered the convent as one going to her own execution; for the struggle between her worldly tendencies and the inexorable voice of God was so terrible that she felt herself stunned by the impact of both in her mind, and was unable to resist any longer, but was passive and weary and without enthusiasm. The terms she uses in describing the tortures of the state previous to her profession are the most violent imaginable. After that, she tells us, there was nothing left that might have frightened her or that she would not have had the courage to conquer. And then comes a touching phrase, 'As soon as I donned the religious robe, God gave me such a great contentment in having embraced that state that it has never since decreased unto this day. And He has changed the dryness of

my soul into infinite tenderness'. This certainly was the first foretaste she had of her future state for which she had yet to struggle for many years.

Even at that time the one idea that dominated her, the *todo es nada*, all his nothing, was the most terrible trial. The world is vanity, nay, illusion. True happiness is not obtainable except by the determined negation of the world and its ensnaring promises. And if Teresa had gone to the cloister, it had been more because she was athirst after happiness, 'for ever, ever, ever', because this desire had become an obsession and filled her with unspeakable and irresistible longing. But in order to deny the world and to detach oneself really from it, inwardly, not only in the outward appearance of a cloistered life, one must be supported by a great all-conquering love and certitude of the goal. One must feel that there is another more perfect reality to fill up the void left in the heart through the abandonment of all that allures one in nature and in people. So Teresa confesses, 'At that time, I had not, as it seems to me, the love of God as I believe not to have had it before I began to pray. But a light made me see the little worth of all that must end, and

on the other hand the great worth of the goods one acquires through love ; for they are eternal'. In this point Teresa very much resembles the great Indian sages. Her soul yearned for the eternal, the unchanging, something that should remain under all circumstances, something beyond all transitoriness. She could not content herself with a less, with the average life of constant change and uncertainty led by a good religious person, but had to climb to the highest peak of realisation before peace came to her.

During the time of her illness when she was living at home, she had been sent to Becedas to undergo treatment at the hands of a peasant woman. And it was there the strange story happened that has so often been distorted by the enemies of Teresa, and that yet is so typical of her that it should never be glossed over or overlooked. It shows all the passionateness of her nature, and easily lends itself to the crudest interpretations of the modern psychoanalyst if the case is not studied with great care. For Teresa it was always difficult to control the impulses of her heart and her sudden violent friendships ; but this passionateness was always directed to the highest goal and aimed at helping

others in overcoming their weaknesses. And it was the very quality that made her in later years the great reformer she was, because it gave life and intensity to all she did and taught.

This episode caused much self-reproach to Teresa because the study of Osuna's *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual* (Third Spiritual Alphabet) and the devotional exercises she went through at her sister's place Castellanos de la Canada had been the beginning of that total renunciation of personal affection that was to detach her more and more from the world and its creatures. To her, it seemed that through this friendship with the village priest the devil had really begun to decompose her soul by turning it away from its only true love, and that she had committed a great fault, although there is no doubt, that her love for the priest was perfectly pure and well-intentioned.

The whole episode is highly characteristic. It shows all the spontaneity so typical of Teresa, and, at the same time, the great difficulty she had in moderating the sudden outbursts of her heart wherever she saw worth and lovable ness in a person.

After her arrival at Becedas Teresa made the acquaintance

of the village-priest who, though not highly cultured, was gifted with exceptional intelligence and full of goodness. He became her confessor, and in her joy at having found someone who seemed to understand her, her whole heart went out to him in a fervent friendship that was soon to develop into deep love on both sides. Teresa herself tells us explicitly, 'I loved him very much'. The priest feeling himself to be unworthy of such affection and esteem one day confessed to Teresa that he had been living with a woman for the last seven years and thereby had been greatly scandalised in the village. But so great was her love for the priest and so penetrating her gaze that although her nature revolted at the very idea of one who had thus broken his most sacred vows, she tells us, 'the poor man was not so guilty'. She had come to know his good points and believed that it was chiefly the woman who had drawn him cunningly by slow steps into the dark mazes of this intrigue. The confession of the priest roused in Teresa a passionate desire to save him, and when he told her that the woman had given him a little copper figure to wear round his neck, Teresa at once threw it into the river. Strange to say,

from that moment it was as if the priest had been suddenly awakened from a deep dream which he had been in for years. He broke off his clandestine illicit relations and began to lead a completely transformed life. He died a year later.

It is a curious story of human love and secrecy which seems greatly to have disturbed Teresa's conscience in later years when she had grown in detachment and gained better control over her wayward heart and emotions; but it should never be interpreted in a crudely sexual sense as has been done by many.

Teresa's health now greatly deteriorated by the terrible treatment of the peasant woman so that her father hurried her back to Avila. There the doctors were once more consulted and they declared her beyond all hope. Her strange unknown nervous ailment continued to disable her more and more physically, causing her the worst paroxysms of pain and suffering.

This state continued for three months up to the day of the Assumption in 1537. That day after a very minute confession a terrible crisis overcame Teresa. She lost all consciousness and during four days she appeared so lifeless that her grave was dug at the Encarnacion and

candles were lighted at her bedside. The nuns even sent for her body to have it buried. But for her father who found some traces of life where the doctors saw only death, this would really have been her fate. To make matters worse, her brother, Lorenzo de Cepeda, who kept vigil in her room during one of the four nights of her swoon, fell asleep and did not perceive that a wick of one of the candles that had burnt down set fire to the sheets and cushions of her bed. Fortunately the smoke awakened him in time to have the fire extinguished; otherwise she would have been lost.

When she came back to life she was in a pitiable state. Eight long months passed away in convalescence, now and then broken by terrible attacks of excruciating pain and fever.

As soon as Teresa felt a little better she asked to be brought back to the convent. But for a long time she remained unable to resume the common life and had to stay in the infirmary. She was still half paralysed. The day she succeeded for the first time in dragging herself along with the help of her hands, she thanked God.

Her health remained very poor until she resolutely turned to the mystic way, the way which

had called her soul from the days of her earliest childhood, and which had been overgrown by the weeds of worldly longings and little worldly vanities. These, though not seriously bad in themselves, had nevertheless hidden it from her soul and made her wander in the mazes of unfulfilled longings and hopes. From that time onwards her real recovery began. And though she never regained her health completely, she became strong enough to follow the spiritual path and finally to reach the goal that allured her and drew her soul with ever greater intensity.

Many years of Teresa's conventional life were spent in the usual way without anything to show the exceptional spiritual gifts of the young nun. But finally her great inner steadfastness and the energy and unbendingness of her will overcame all obstacles. The intensity of her faith triumphed over the periods of struggle and spiritual dryness.

About 1555 Teresa was reborn into a new life, a life that was no longer satisfied with the lowest levels of perfection, as she herself called them, but aimed at Perfection itself—the life for which she had been yearning and aspiring ever since the days of her childhood and which

promised her the unchanging blessedness and joy, 'for ever, ever, ever'.

Slowly a very high ideal took complete possession of her mind, an ideal greatly superior to the average monastic life of her day. In the face of the purity of this ideal, in its absoluteness, her fearless self-examination caused her deep and prolonged anxieties, especially as most of her confessors were unable to sound the depths of her yearning and inspiration or to understand the true nature of her spiritual experiences which most of them believed to be of a demoniacal origin and sinful.

Thus the spiritual directors were more a hindrance to her development than helps or safe guides, and they greatly retarded the free progress of her spiritual evolution. Her fellow-nuns, too, suspected her sincerity. They believed her to be an unbalanced ambitious hypocrite wishing to pose as a saint. Her great desire for spiritual perfection and for a true life in Christ roused the spiteful mockery of the very persons with whom she had to live, and who should have been a help and a comfort to her in her hours of despondency and bewilderment ?

So her convent life became a touching drama of straight-

forwardness and uprightness. She had to fight against the smallest stirrings of her ego and put up a ceaseless struggle against the narrow-minded miscomprehension, derision and suspicion of her spiritual directors, who in every spiritual experience caught a whiff of the sulphurous odour of hellish unclean sprites. She had also to put up with the complacent mediocrity of her fellow-nuns who could not grasp the intensity of her spiritual striving and thought their own way to be sufficient for those who had professed monastic vows.

Those years of loneliness and trial must have been the hardest in St.Teresa's life; but they more than anything else made her later on an energetic reformer and clear thinker who succeeded in bending all opposition in spite of the humility of her bearing and the strict obedience she always showed her superiors. Only a soul with the rarest spiritual gifts could have overcome the relentless resistance of her surroundings and yet have remained within the folds of the Church without being crippled by the mental strait-jacket of the Inquisition.

For those who wish to become intimately acquainted with St. Teresa, her first vision and the

circumstances under which it was brought about form an interesting study. Here again we find the intense passionate-ness of all her life and the great longing for friendship and human intimacy. Her first vision was caused by one of these passionate friendships that suddenly used to take possession of her soul and made her seek the company of those to whom it was directed. She herself tells us in her simple matter-of-fact way, 'One day, finding myself in the company of a certain person at the very beginning of our acquaintance, the Lord wished to make me understand that such friendships were not fitting for me, by warning me and giving me His light in so great a blindness. Christ showed himself to me with a very severe countenance and made me understand that this displeased Him greatly. I beheld Him with the eyes of the soul more clearly than I could have seen Him with the eyes of the body. And this vision ever remained so impressed in my mind that it appears to me just as present after twenty-six years. I remained very much terrified and greatly troubled by it. And I did not want to see the person in whose company I had been, again'.

This and the later vision of the toad that was also seen by others are highly typical of St. Teresa. These slowly brought about a greater detachment from human love and friendship, though, in her case, it must never be forgotten that these had always been so perfectly pure and blameless, that her confessors for a long time did not understand why she herself thought them censurable. They did not know of the first vision of Christ and of the displeasure He had shown to her, as she kept it hidden in her heart for a long time, and did not wish to speak to any body about it, not even to her spiritual directors.

While St. Teresa was still following what she herself calls 'the lower paths of perfection', her father died after a very short illness. This was a heavy blow to her affectionate nature. He had been her pupil in a certain sense after she had taken the veil. She had catechised him for many months and lent him a number of books on spirituality, among which was Osuna's wonderful *Tercer Abecedario Espiritual* (Third Spiritual Alphabet.)

Before she herself began following the higher paths of spiritual life, St. Teresa was always seeking for fit substitutes

for herself, as it were, and among them was her father. Of this characteristic tendency she tells us with her usual captivating frankness, 'It seemed to me that, as I myself did not serve the Lord as I knew He had to be served, the intelligence He gave me of His service was not to be lost; and thus others had to serve Him in my stead. I am saying this in order to make people see the great blindness in which I dwelt'.

The year of her father's death was probably 1543. At the news of his illness St. Teresa had once more left her convent to hurry home and nurse him during his last days. Though her pain was terrible, she controlled herself outwardly as much as possible so as not to make him feel it. She says, 'It seemed to me that my soul was being torn from me when I saw that his life was going to end; for I loved him very dearly'.

This bereavement was another of the hard trials in Teresa's life that were to lead her on to the miracle of the Transverberation, and finally to the greatest spiritual heights where she attained real at-one-ment with God. For always the loss of a beloved person with whom she had lived in close intimacy meant the most agonizing suffering to her

passionate soul. And this was to remain so until the very end of her life. It is true that slowly her affections underwent an ever-growing purification, but this innate passionateness of her love with all its anguish, joy and pain, never left her completely, either in the days of her worldly life or in the quiet meditiveness of the cloister. Perhaps this is one of the traits of the Saint's character most difficult for the Indian reader to understand : She was characteristically Western and Spanish in her mental make-up.

Nature very rarely shows a smile in Spain. She has often a sinister glare and a kind of rigid contraction that gives her something of the corpse-like countenance. It seems she has passed on a little of that unbendingness and rigidity to her sons and daughters, which has made them so implacable in their dogma and so fierce in their appetites. Above all, she has made them tremendously extreme in whatever they may be pursuing as their goal, in all their passions and lusts and aspirations. They are, as it were, lovers of absoluteness, absolute honour, absolute chastity, absolute power, absolute individualism, absolute obedience, absolute passion in every form.

(To be continued)

## THE LIFE ACCORDING TO NATURE

When you find an unwillingness to rise early in the morning make this short speech to yourself : I am getting up now to do the business of a man ; and am I out of humour for going about that I was made for, and for the sake of which I was sent into the world ? Was I then designed for nothing but to doze and keep warm beneath the counterpane ? Remember that business and doing service to the world is to act up to nature and live like a man. But to sleep is common to unreasonable creatures also.

Everything is made for some end. The sun itself has its business assigned, and so too the celestial deities. But pray, what were you made for ? For pleasure ? Common sense will not brook such an answer.

Among all things in the universe, direct your worship to the greatest. And which is that ? It is that being which manages and governs all the rest. And as you worship the best thing in nature, so you are to pay a proportionate regard to the best thing in yourself ; you will know it by its kinship to the Deity. The quality of its functions will discover it. It is the reigning

power within you, which disposes of your actions and your fortune.

All parts of the universe are interwoven and tied together. And no one thing is foreign or unrelated to another. This general connection gives unity and ornament to the world. For the world, take it altogether, is but one. There is but one sort of matter to make it of ; one god to govern it ; and one law to guide it. There is one common reason, and one truth.

\* \* \* \*

Satisfaction consists in following the bent of nature, and doing the things we were made for. And how is this to be compassed ? By the practice of general kindness, by neglecting the importunity of our senses, by distinguishing appearance from truth, and by contemplating the nature of the Almighty.

Do not act as if you had ten thousand years to throw away. Death stands at your elbow. Make the most of your minute, and be good for something, while it is in your power.

Consider the satisfactions of life singly, and examine them as they come up ; and then ask yourself if death is so terrible in taking them from you.

You are just taking leave of the world, and have you not done with unnecessary desires? Are you not above disturbance and suspicion, and fully convinced that nothing without your will can hurt you? Have you not learned to be friends with everybody, and that to be an honest man is the only way to be a wise one?

\* \* \* \*

Whatever is agreeable to you,

O Universe, is so to me too, Your actions are never mistimed. Your methods are acceptable, and your seasons are all spring and summer to me! From you all things proceed, subsist in you, and return to you. And if the poet called Athens "The beloved city of Cecrops", may we not style the world "The beloved City of God"?

From the *Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.*

## REVIEWS & NOTICES

**Neem Tree:** Poems of Bhagirath Mehta. Published by N. M. Thakkar & company, Booksellers & Publishers, 140 Princess Street, Bombay. Pp. 24 Price Re. 1/-

The price of the book is exorbitant. The poems do not rise above the commonplace level of pedestrian verses with a touch of poetic feeling here and there. On reading it one is reminded of these words of Ruskin : 'There are few men, ordinarily educated, who in moments of strong feeling could not strike out a poetical thought, and afterwards, polish it so as to be presentable. But men of sense know better than so to waste their time ; and those who sincerely love poetry, know the touch of the master's hand on the chords too well to fumble among them after him. Nay, more than this; all inferior poetry is an injury to the good, inasmuch as it takes away the freshness of rhymes, blunders upon and gives wretched commonality to good thought and, in general, adds to the weight of human weariness in a most woeful and culpable manner'.

**Darshan:** A Bengali Quarterly Journal. Devoted to philosophy. Edited by Dr. Satischandra Chatterjee, M.A., Ph. D., Vol. I & II. Price Re. 1/- per issue. Annual subscription: Rs. 4/-

It is with genuine gratification that we welcome the birth of this journal, under the able editorship of Dr. Satischandra Chatterjee. The journal is solely devoted to philosophical speculation.

Bengal has produced a number of literary men who have directed their talents to theological and philosophical study and research and have thereby enriched the Bengali literature considerably. It is worthy of note that our new contemporary has devoted itself to the service of literature along those lines.

The issues under review contain a number of illuminating articles from the pen of eminent writers. We have great pleasure in recommending it to Libraries and Reading Rooms. We wish the journal all success it richly deserves.

The Krishna Lila Number of the Kalyana Kalpatharu. Gita Press, Gorakpur.

Often there is a distinctive charm and sumptuous simplicity about the productions of the Gita Press, especially about the Special Numbers of the Kalyana Kalpatharu. These merits have qualified the above publications for the wide popularity they enjoy.

The present volume is a lucid rendering of the tenth Skandha of the Bhagavatam. The Dasamaskandha of the Bhagavatam contains exquisite pen pictures of the early days of Sri Krishna, his adventures with the asuras, his boyish pranks with the gopis and gopas of Gokula etc.

No pains have been spared to closely follow the original and yet keep up the liveliness and flow of the narrative. The interest of the narrative has been enlivened by suitable, attractive illustrations.

The volume richly deserves a place in all Libraries and Reading Rooms and we recommend it to devotees of Sri Krishna.

Only the first half of the tenth Skandha appears here. The other half, says the Publisher, will be published next year. We look forward eagerly to this forthcoming valuable publication.

## NEWS & REPORTS

### The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Patna : Report for 1941

The Ramakrishna Ashrama Patna started in 1922 by the late Swami Jnaneswarananda, has been steadily progressing in its philanthropic activities. It is worthy of note here that Swamis Turiyananda and Adbhutananda, two disciples of Sri Ramakrishna had, in the beginning, inspired the work of the Ashrama.

In 1930 the Ashrama came to have its present site with a bungalow. In the same year it was affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission. Later on a charitable Dispensary, a free Primary School, a Students' Home and a Library sprang up and three new buildings were constructed to accommodate those sections.

**The Upper Primary School :** The Adbhutananda Pathasala is run by the Municipal grant. There were 19 boys on the rolls during the year and four paid teachers are in charge of the work.

The Turiyananda Library contains 655 volumes. The Reading Room receives 9 periodicals.

The Bhuvaneswara Charitable Dispensary treated 37,258 cases of which 6,961 were new and 30,297 old.

During the year under review the Birthdays of Sri Krishna, Sri Buddha, Sri Sankara, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and the Holy Mother were celebrated. Srimat Swami Virajanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and Swami Madhavanandaji, General Secretary, visited the Ashrama. Many other distinguished men including high Government officials paid their visits to the institution.

The total income for the year under different heads was Rs. 2,278-13-11 and the expenses came to Rs. 1,757-15-6. The Ashrama authorities thank their sympathisers for their uniform support and co-operation.

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**ALL'S RIGHT WITH THE WORLD**

He who dwells in the Earth, who is other than the Earth, whom the Earth does not know, whose body the Earth is, who controls the Earth from within, he is yourself, the inner controller, the immortal.

—Brihadaranyaka. up. iii. 7.

I

To infer God from an orderly universe had been the habit of the human mind ever since it began to think. The benign design that is in evidence in the world has inspired in many an overwhelmingly positive faith in a God who sustains from his heaven the world below. Here is a sparkling instance :

The year's at the spring  
And day's at the dawn  
x x x x  
The lark's on the wing  
The snail's on thorn  
God's in His Heaven  
And all's right with the world.

A merciful God who maintains intact an orderly world—that is the upshot of the poet's optimism. But often the world goes out of gear and turns out so forbiddingly disorderly—not, of course, more disorderly than it is to-day—that it throttles all such optimism. The plain man particularly, finds himself incapable to share the poet's optimism in the midst of gruesome disorders, and it is only natural that the mind which has in propitious circumstance turned to God and sung His glory should in inclement weather turn round and disown Him outright. In the same nineteenth century as the poet wrote the above lines, we read of a dreadful incident in one of the consular reports of the Armenian massacres of 1895. At that time

the universal dread and horror throughout Armenia sent most people praying day and night in the churches. But the report tells of a woman who sat by the road and refused to pray. 'Do you not see what has happened?' she said. 'God has gone mad. It is no use praying to him.' (*International Crisis p. 39*)

If God is the author of Nature, is he the author of evil also? Today evil has become such an unshakable reality that we are anxious to ascribe it to something or somebody. To whom shall we attribute it? 'The reality of evil', says Sir S. Radhakrishnan, 'has become a part of the accepted code of philosophy. ... ... who can withstand the temptation to regard evil as a fundamental reality, who that lives in this age to witness..... such unspeakable atrocities of civilized Europe in the twentieth century'. But the modern mind is not willing to lay the responsibility for evil at the feet of God. The West ascribes evil to something else than God. How can it trace evil to God so long as a 'good' God is a deep necessity of its heart? It is held in the West that if evil were not due to some other force, God would not have tolerated it and continued as a passive witness to it. As God is thus conceived as no party to the evil, He is supposed to lend his aid to subdue it. It will be

clear in the sequel that this conception of evil is a natural transition from the dualistic philosophy based on God and the world as His creation. As a result of this transition a finite God comes to stay. And the sympathies of this finite God are with man whom He helps in his struggle to overcome evil.

## II

Typical of the spirit of the times are the words of Mr. Wells whose hero speaks out: '... ... a finite God who struggles in his great and comprehensive way as we struggle in our weak and silly way—who is *with us*—that is the essence of all real religion. ... ... If I thought there was an omnipotent God who looked down on battles and deaths and all the waste and horror of this war—able to prevent these things, doing them to amuse himself, I would spit in his empty face'. (*Mr. Britling Sees it Through p. 397*). A finite God, human to the core, is what they want. The West seems to be fond of an omnipotent God. Mr. Wells makes his God human even in his passions and party interests: 'He has his own ends for which he needs us'. (*The Invisible King p. 42*). It is very significant to remember here that Christianity has largely contributed towards the inculcation of this belief. The Christian conception makes God manifest himself in the world and share in

the suffering which it involves. God comes to take sides in the conflicts and sorrows of finite creatures. Hitler praying to his party God for a Nazi victory and the Allies putting up mass prayers for an Allied Victory show how deep-seated is this anthropomorphic conception of God in the hearts of the people.

We have seen how the above conception of God has been very effectively encouraged by the sense of the predominance of evil in the world. It has become increasingly impossible for the modern westerner to dismiss evil as an illusion. He feels it to be real. His anxiety to keep his God 'intact' stands in the way of shifting the burden to the shoulders of God. And the westerner is too congenital an extrovert to point the finger to himself and ascribe it to him. So he runs into an irrational over-simplification of attributing the evil to the world and takes refuge in the words, 'All is not right with the world'. But this extraneous evil cannot but goad him to action and he launches himself in a campaign against it. This shows how the tireless efforts that we see in the West to conquer the external world by the aid of science are inspired and sustained by this conception of the world as the seat of evil. In it also is to be found the clue to the modern attitude to manufacture. The necessity

for more power to better subdue this evil has driven the modern westerner to his all-absorbing concentration in scientific discoveries and manufacture.

### III

With all our loud professions of civilization *qua* progress, it has to be admitted that the belief in a finite God, out and out human, running this world-show is a return to the medieval conception of the world as a piece of mechanism and God as an 'external architect'. Both modern science and philosophy declare in favour of this idea. Sir James Jeans in his *Mysterious Universe* ably proounds the idea of God as a mathematical architect. The Second Law of Thermodynamics holds that the universe is running down (like a mechanism) and that it will ultimately cease to be. This mechanistic view of the world brought forward by the scientist has its counterpart in the utilitarian view of the philosopher, the two views being the obverse and reverse of the same coin. The *Pragmatism* of William James is a sort of utilitarianism in philosophy. It accepts God as a satisfactory working hypothesis for life. The *Creative Evolution* of Bergson depicts the world as a dynamic flux of change and, strife to be the end and ultimate expression of the universe. The above cosmology which science and

philosophy inculcate is evidently not in humour with a view of life as 'evolution' but as 'manufacture'. In the face of this fact the modern age shifting its emphasis from 'evolution' to 'manufacture' and the mad run for technological progress stand explained. This shifting of emphasis is a pointer to a change of faith that has come to believe in progress in cosmogeny by manufacture and not by evolution.

This change of faith and the shifting of emphasis that it has entailed have spiritual implications which are of far-reaching importance to life. Writes Lloyd Morgan, "Evolution not manufacture". That surely can mean naught else than "natural not supernatural". In a sense that is so. The sense in which it is so, implies radically disparate dualism'. When this dualism of the natural and the supernatural came to bear on life, it made man to see life sundered in two, the temporal and the spiritual and not as an organic whole as he ought to. The sundering created artificial compartments in life which has interfered with the spiritual growth of the man and has thus done violence to his inner being. Not only that. The separation of the temporal from the spiritual has gradually encouraged him to identify himself with the temporal. Once in it, he has

passed into an illusion of self-sufficiency and has ended in making his temporal sphere autonomous with no real allegiance to the spiritual. In one word, man has become an autonomous unit today with no responsibility moral or otherwise to the Centre, to the paramount power, the spirit. The pernicious reactions to this separation and the declaration of independance, are too patent in the life of the modern man. It is notorious today that heavenly rewards no longer lure and infernal punishments no longer deter with their pristine force; many are frankly derisive of both and seeing no prospect of divine compensation in the next world for the pleasures that morality bids them eschew in this world, take more or less unanimously to sensual pleasures. The contemporary attitude to life is thus dangerously epicurean. There is a mad run for making the most of the present moment, evidencing thereby a woeful lack of faith in the higher values of life. Recent trends in philosophy also appear to have got the contagion of this general rot, for they have set these frivolous tendencies on a premium by discovering in them values to life and substantiating them. What is looked by the thinking few as the curse of modern society, its hurry, its restless excitement, is deified by 'systems' like the activism of

Eucken and the primacy of the practical of William James and the pragmatists. But more than all is the influence of Christianity which by its predominant other-worldly nature has made an unbridgeable gulf between temporal life and the spiritual. Rousseau was quite just when he said, 'Christianity is an entirely spiritual religion concerned solely with heavenly things: the Christian's country is not of this world.....If the State declines, he blesses the hand of God which lies heavy on his people'. One need not doubt whether these words apply to European Christianity. For, it is also in marked antagonism to the modern secular life of the West.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV

In striking contrast to this life is happily the Brahmanical religious life in India which has never sundered itself from the daily working of the life of the laity, but is a component part of it and is indissolubly bound up with it. India is fully aware of the metaphysical bases of her life. 'The essential distinction of the East from the (modern) West', observes Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, 'and one that involves all other differences is

that the East.....has still preserved and is still conscious of the metaphysical bases of its life, while the modern West is almost completely ignorant of traditional metaphysics and is at the same time actively and consciously anti-traditional.' The anti-traditional West may point its finger of scorn to the traditional East and call it the unchanging East, but to be blind to her priceless devotion to the incorporation of the spiritual values in life and culmination in a non-complaisant humanitarianism, would be to miss something the West needs now most and the best East can offer.

The way in which India achieves the affirmation of the spiritual in life opens a practical approach to the crux of the western problem. India asserts the spiritual in life by assigning paramountcy to the Real, by placing the Self above all things. 'The Self should be emphasized above all things' says the Upanishad. Everything in this world is dear to us not in themselves, but because of the Self, of the Real they enshrine. It is not of the primacy of the practical that Indian wisdom speaks, but of the primacy of the Self. A realiza-

1. We are not blind to the fact that there is the other emphasis in Christianity, the emphasis on the continuity of the spiritual into the temporal, as contained in the words, 'The kingdom of God is within you'. But European Christianity has travelled far from this truth and has lost its way in the wilderness.

tion of the primacy of the Self will surely help us in shifting the 'centre of gravity' to the Self which must be made our starting point. The West has taken a wrong start : It has forgotten the Self and has thrown the blame of evil on to the world, preserving its 'good' God high up in a heavenly tabernacle. But the East is congenitally introvertive. It points the finger to itself and says 'the evil is in me; but the good also is in me. The self is my friend and foe. Hence by the affirmation of the good self in me, I have to redeem myself'. To this end, the East has built the sanctum for the divinity not in the starry heavens but in the very centre of life, in the heart from where it would radiate light into the corners of life. Evil there is; but the predominance of good over evil is a greater reality to the Indian. In the depths of their being seers Indian and foreign found the preponderance of good. Jesus by the Jordan in the stillness of prayer, Buddha lost in contemplation under the Bodhi tree, Sri Rama-krishna in the depths of *samadhi*, Francis of Assisi in his prayers in the remote crags of the highlands of Alverno realized the strength and assurance of the reality of goodness, of God. And once they realized the reality of goodness within, the world without was no longer evil, no longer malevolent, but

purely benevolent. For they saw then that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth, truth persists, in the midst of darkness, light persists. Hence to them God is Life, Truth, Light. He is love—He is the supreme good and the world His beloved city. (How we wish that the West may come to this realization). This truth receives a profound subjective turn at the hands of the Upanishadic seers who show the fundamental identity of the inmost essence of man and of the world and naively forge the idea that a realization of this identity assures immortality : 'He who dwells in the Earth, who is other than the Earth..... .....who controls the Earth from within, he is yourself, the inner controller, the immortal.' The consciousness of this identity, the oneness of life will inspire and usher into life amity and concord and must flower forth in the dawn of the New Order. But the want of faith the West shows in this essential oneness of life does not make us optimistic of such a dawn.

## V

The strength of the realization of the essential oneness of existence encourages India to look forward to a world of harmony and peace to emerge from the present travail. We may aptly conclude in the words of Sir George Birdwood who

concludes his work *Sva* with the hope that,

India may yet be destined to prepare the way.....through the practical identification of the spiritual with the temporal life, to hasten the period of that third step forward in the moral development of humanity, when there will be no divisions of race or creed or class or nationality between men, by whatsoever name they may be called; for they will be one in the acknowledgment of their common brotherhood with the same reality.....

We have to drown disconcerting 'facts' in the brightest optimism before we would be able to say that the West also has its destination as the sublime culmination of Common brotherhood. To that end then, the start taken by the West is decidedly wrong. It has begun at the wrong end. It has fixed

its gaze on the outer world, as if that were all; and is busy chasing the self-constructed illusion of evil out there. Let it hearken to the words of St. Augustine who wrote: '.....I went round .....this world seeking thee, and I found thee not, because in vain I sought without for him who was within myself'. The West has to come to its own, to the Self, before a right start can be made. For wisely has it been said that the Self must be made the basis of all right endeavour. The West has yet to study the art of looking within and hence has to begin from the 'beginning' with the conquest of the lower self. It is unhelpful to throw the blame on to the world. All is right with the world; but all is not right with us.

## SELF-EFFORT ALONE COUNTS

*By Swami Sivananda*

A group of house-holder devotees had come to the Belur Math to see Sri Mahapurushaji maharaj and an old man from amongst them had earnestly sought for some spiritual instruction.

The Swamiji began in a loving tone:

Well, my dear friend, what instruction shall I give. We have only one instruction: See that you never forget the Lord. As for ourselves we always try to hold on to Him and when anybody seeks counsel, we ask them

also to do the same. You are in the world; that is alright. Who else is not in the world? Attend to all your duties in the world. I don't ask you to give them up. But along with that you have to pray to Him most sincerely at the end of the day's toils or once at anytime of the day. Rightly has it been written in the Vaishnavite literature that while the hands are engaged in activities, let there be the name of the Lord on the lips.

As you have a specified time for every piece of work, so also there should be a fixed time for praying to the Lord. And at that time no other work should keep you away from worship and meditation. However little you may pray, let it be done with the utmost sincerity. He dwells within us all and knows our heart: This is the supreme secret. To hold on to Him is to usher in peace in your life; to forget Him is to invite trouble.

A woman devotee: Maharaj, how is it that we forget God? Why is it that our mind does not go towards Him?

Mahapurushaji: O, you are asking me the reason for forgetting God. That is Maya. Being bound by Maya we become absorbed in things transitory and completely forgetful of the Lord. How can you love Him when you have given all your heart to things of the world. That this world is evanescent, that your body, your relations and all other things you are mad after, are all transitory require no evidence. Day and night their ephemerality is being impressed on you with all force. Still you cling on to them and leave out of account the Real, God.

The woman devotee: But then, venerable father, how shall we be saved?

Mahapurushaji: There is no other way than cutting asunder

the bonds of this Maya. And that is done by surrendering oneself to God. Has not the Lord said: 'Verily, this divine illusion of Mine is hard to surmount. Whoever seek Me, they alone cross over this illusion'. You have to pour out your heart and pray to Him with tears in your eyes: O Lord, bestow your grace on me. And when such prayers have washed your heart clean of all dirt, He will reveal Himself to you with the light of a thousand suns. At intervals practise discrimination as to what is real and what is unreal. God alone is real. The world, birth and death, happiness and misery, all these are unreal. When you proceed with this kind of discrimination, you shall find that His mercy is dawning on you. You shall have dispassion for worldly things and your mind shall go automatically towards God.

The woman devotee: Holy father, Be kind enough to bless us, so that we can cross this ocean of *samsara*.

Mahapurushaji: All that we can do is to give you blessings. The rest lies in you. Self-effort is the thing that counts. It paves the path to salvation. It is our heart's desire that people should cross the ocean of *Samsara*. That you may have real devotion to the Lord is my earnest prayer.

## THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

By Dr. Satischandra Chatterjee, M. A. Ph. D.,

### II

Now we proceed to consider the more fundamental problem, the metaphysical nature of knowledge. The questions which arise here are: What is knowledge in itself? What is its status as a fact of reality? Is it an activity or a quality or a relation?

Many philosophers think that knowledge is an activity of some sort. Their view is known as the act theory of knowledge. It is not difficult to see what induced these thinkers to reduce knowledge to some kind of activity. There can be no knowledge unless the mind responds to the influences of the surrounding world. In the states of sleep and inattention we do not know any external objects, although these may act on our senses. If there is to be any knowledge, the mind must react to the actions of other things on it. Hence knowledge is a process in which the mind actively responds and reaches out to objects, and somehow illuminates them.

The act theory of knowledge has been accepted by various schools of philosophers. In Indian philosophy, the Buddha and the Mimamsa systems uphold it. For the former, to exist is to act and so, to change. Knowledge as an existent fact

consists in the *conscious* act of showing and leading to an object. According to the Mimamsaka, knowledge is a *mental* action (*kriya*) which refers to an object. For Herbert Spencer, knowledge appears as an incident in the adaptation of the organism to the environment, when its tendencies towards action counteract one another and are thrown back on themselves so as to become *conscious* of their existence. Some voluntarists hold that cognition is the will when it is thwarted by difficulties and so looks for (i. e. *thinks of*) means to overcome them. But in all these descriptions of the nature of knowledge there is some confusion of thought and what they give us is not the metaphysical nature of knowledge, although they propose to do so. To say with the Buddhists and the Mimamsakas that knowledge is the conscious or mental act of showing or leading or referring to an object, is to presuppose knowledge and not to explain it. For, what is known as a conscious or mental act is itself an object of knowledge and not knowledge in itself. Or, we may say that, for an act, to be conscious or to be mental is already to be a fact of knowledge, so that its reference to the object neither belongs to

nor brings out its essence. Similarly, Spencer and the voluntarists rather assume knowledge than explain it. For an organic tendency towards action to be simply counteracted and thrown back on itself is not to become conscious of its existence, unless by some trick consciousness is superadded to it or it has consciousness embedded in it. If it were so, then any tendency towards action, be it organic or not, would become conscious when somehow counteracted and hurled back on itself by a stronger force. When the voluntarists reduce cognition to a thwarted will, they forget that there may be cognition or thought even before the will is actually thwarted. Or, if the will cannot cognise or think before it is thwarted by difficulties, we do not see how it can, when so thwarted; for a thwarted will is as much an unconscious activity as any other. As such, it cannot even know that it is thwarted by difficulties and so must look for means to overcome them. If, however, the unconscious will somehow knows these facts, we are to say that it is either favoured by chance or gifted by nature with the power of consciousness.

Some modern psychologists, known as the behaviourists, go further than the older empiricists and materialists, and deny

the reality of mind, consciousness or knowledge altogether. For them the human individual is, like the animal, a complex of body and behaviour. There is in him no mind or consciousness. He behaves in different ways in different situations of life. Some of these behaviours are called unconscious and automatic actions, while others are called conscious and voluntary activities. But all of them are really behaviours or responses of the body to stimulations of different kinds. The difference between the conscious and the unconscious activity of a man is not due to the presence of any mental or conscious process of thought and deliberation in the one and its absence in the other. Rather, it is due to the fact that the one involves both implicit and explicit behaviour, while the other is only an explicit behaviour or overt bodily movement. Thus what is called 'action after deliberation' (which is another name for conscious or voluntary action) is an organic response which first involves implicit behaviour consisting of certain internal and imperceptible nervous processes in the vocal organ, and is then expressed by way of explicit behaviour or perceptible movements. Thought or consciousness is just the implicit behaviour of the body located in the vocal organ and having the form

of sub-vocal speech. Hence knowledge is a particular kind of behaviour in animals, or, as otherwise described, such response to the stimulus as has the characteristics of appropriateness and accuracy.

The behaviouristic reform in psychology is more drastic than any other preceding it. While the older materialists treat mind or consciousness as an epiphenomenon or bye-product of brain activity, the behaviourists deny the very existence of it and allow bodily behaviour to take its place. But this seems to be a logically indefensible position. Behaviour is as much an object of consciousness or knowledge as any other physical thing or event. That there is any behaviour, explicit or implicit, can be known only if there be a conscious mind or a knowing subject. To say that behaviour itself is consciousness or knowledge is to ignore the distinction between conscious and unconscious activity, for as behaviour they are the same and should be equally conscious. If, however, we find that some behaviours are conscious and intelligent, while others are not, we are to say that they are more than mere behaviour. The consciousness that undoubtedly attends some of our behaviours cannot be explained by the interposition of internal and imperceptible movements in the vocal organ.

That there are such internal movements may be true, but that bodily movements become conscious simply because they are internal is hardly true and intelligible. To say that there is no question of the movement becoming conscious but that such movement is wrongly regarded as conscious, is not only to reject the evidence of our immediate experience but to make the origin of the idea of consciousness impossible. Hence the difference between conscious and unconscious activity is not simply a nominal one between implicit and explicit behaviour, but a real difference between that of which we are conscious and that of which we are not. If a behaviour *as such* were consciousness, there would be no distinction between behaviour and the consciousness of behaviour, because there is nothing more in the latter than what is contained in the former. But that there may be unconscious as well as conscious behaviour is the real basis of behaviourist polemic against traditional psychology and idealistic philosophy. Hence we contend that knowledge or consciousness is left none the less unexplained by the more modern and subtle materialist called the behaviourist than it was by the older and cruder materialist.

Professor Alexander, the renowned British neo-realist, tells us that knowledge or experience is the simplest of all relations which may hold between any two objects. It is the compresence between the act of mind or the awareness and the object of which it is aware. There may be compresence between two physical objects, e. g. a tree and the earth on which it stands. Or, there may be compresence between two mental acts as when I see a friend and hear his voice, and distinguish between the acts of seeing and hearing. Similarly, there may be a relation of compresence between a mind and some non-mental object. and it is here that togetherness or compresence takes the form of cognition or experience. It is difficult to say what exactly Alexander's view is with regard to the nature of knowledge. Apparently, he seems to think that knowledge or cognition means just the compresence between a mind and an external or non-mental object. This relation, he assures us, is nothing unique or peculiar to knowledge. It may hold between any two objects, physical or mental. But when such relation obtains between two physical objects, there is obviously no knowledge or cognition. So also when it holds between two mental acts,

e. g. seeing and hearing a harmonium, there is no cognition or awareness of the one by the other. We cannot say that our visual experience of the harmonium cognises or is aware of the auditory experience of it, although it may certainly be said that we are aware of both. But if in every case, the relation of compresence be the same, we do not see why in some cases it does and in others it does not lead to cognition or knowledge. Of course, Alexander says that for every experience there must be compresence between the *act of mind or the awareness* and the object of which it is aware. But if there is an act of mind which is, forsooth, already the awareness of the object, we are to say that experience or knowledge is the mental act of awareness of an object. and that its compresence with the latter is a redundant condition which may be discarded. The act of mind, Alexander tells us further, is experienced, although it be in a different way from that in which the object is experienced. The object is that of which we have experience, but the experiencing act or awareness is aware of itself. To quote his own words, 'My awareness and my being aware of it are identical.'<sup>8</sup> To mark this distinction between the awareness of an object and of awareness itself, Alexander

<sup>8.</sup> Cf. *Space, Time and Deity*, Vol. I, p. 12

rightly observes that the one is contemplated and the other enjoyed, that the mind enjoys itself and contemplates its object. If this be true, then we must admit that there may be experience or knowledge of mind or of mental acts even when there is no compresence between the mind and some non-mental object. Since 'my awareness and my being aware of it are identical' we have to say that experience or knowledge of some sort is present in 'the mental act or the awareness' even before it is compresent with any object. It seems, therefore, that Alexander's theory of cognition as compresence between 'the act of mind or the *awareness* and the object of which it is aware', does not explain knowledge; rather it assumes knowledge as inherent in the mental act or the awareness.

In the Italian School of neo-idealism as represented by Benedetto Croce and Giovanni Gentile, knowledge is said to be the function of the theoretical activity of mind, while will or volition is the function of its practical activity. Reality is a universal Mind or Spirit which creates alike itself and its environment. It assumes for us a variety of forms. The first form is that of knowing which Croce calls the theoretical activity and which he divides into two sub-

grades, viz. intuition and conceptual thought. The second form is that of willing or acting which is called the practical activity and is divided into two sub-grades, the economical and the ethical. Now while we can understand what practical activity or willing is like, we can hardly make clear to ourselves what the theoretical activity of mind is. Willing, we are told by Croce, is acting in the sense of producing actual movements of the body. A volition is not something which may or may not be followed by 'movements of the legs and arms; these movements are the volition'. Admitting that this is a true description of willing, what are we to say with regard to the nature of knowledge or knowing? It is said to be the function of the theoretical activity of mind. But then what is the nature of the theoretical activity which functions in knowing? It is not any kind of physical actitity, force or motion. Nor is it of the form of willing as constituted by movements of the legs and arms. When we know anything we do not simply move our limbs or produce changes in the external world. Nor can knowing be said to be of the form of theoretical activity in any other sense. Croce admits that it is impossible to imagine an action which is not willed. If this be so then all activities of the mind, the

theoretical not excepted, must be of the nature of willing or of bodily actions. It follows that we must either deny the distinction between knowing and willing or say that knowing is not an activity at all. That the latter view is correct seems to be also indirectly admitted by Croce when he holds that 'the practical form of the mind's activity is logically dependent on theoretical, since, although knowledge exists for the sake of action, we may know without willing or acting, whereas we cannot will or act without previously knowing'. This plainly means that knowledge is the ground of will or activity, but is not identical with it. In so far as this is true, we are to say that any description of knowledge as an activity is either a symbolic or an empirical description of its nature. Knowledge may be said to be an activity because of its analogy to other and real forms of action like the psychical (i. e. will) or the physical (i. e. mechanical motion). It is the ground of will or organic changes, just as physical motion is of inorganic or mechanical changes in the external world. But for that very reason it cannot be said to be identical with willing, activity or bodily movements. If however, we propose to describe

knowledge as an activity, what that really means is that we describe it in terms of what it does or in its relation to other things, i. e. we describe its empirical characters and not its essential nature.

The second theory with regard to the nature of knowledge is that it is a relation between certain entities. According to Meinong, the Austrian realist, and the critical realists, knowledge is a relation among three terms, viz. a mind, an object, and a datum or content. When I know a table, my mind comes into relation with the physical object through the presented character-complex of table called datum or content. Some other realists, like C. D. Broad and G. E. Moore, hold that knowledge is a relation between two terms, viz. a mind and any object. Professor Alexander, as we have already seen, analyses knowledge or cognition to a relation of compresence between the act of mind and the object. Bertrand Russell has, in his successive works,<sup>4</sup> reduced knowledge to a relation between three, two, and one kind of terms. The one kind of terms, to a relation between which he finally seeks to reduce knowledge, is called 'neutral entities', in so far as they are in themselves neither mental nor physical, although

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4. Cf. *The problems of Philosophy*; *Our Knowledge of the External World*; *The Analysis of Mind*.

they give rise to both in different relations. According to the American neo-realists also, 'knowledge is not a relation between a knowing subject and an object known. It is merely a special sort of relation between objects'. Consciousness is, for them, 'not any distinct subjective or mental existence, but only a particular grouping of objects, defined by the specific response of the nervous system'. To know objects, therefore, is for the nervous system to make a specific response to their influence and make a separate collection of them from the environment. These modern realists seem to be anticipated by William James who in his *Essays in Radical Empiricism* reduces knowledge directly to a relation between one type of entities. According to him, knowledge can be easily explained as a particular sort of relation into which portions of 'pure experience' may enter. The relation itself is a part of 'pure experience', one of its terms becomes the subject or bearer of the knowledge, the knower, and the other becomes the object known. The neo-realists, however, go further than James and deny the reality of what he calls 'pure experience' and that of the subject of knowledge, and accept only the reality of objects.

The relation theory of knowledge also does not stand the

test of sound criticism. If one closely examines this theory one would no doubt see that it is no improvement on the act theory of knowledge, but is rather a different form of the latter. A thing's relation to another thing is, as we have already pointed out, not its action on that thing or the expression of their action on us. To be is not to be related. It is only when a thing acts and somehow affects another thing that we say that it is, or how it is, related to the latter. Hence if we say that knowledge is a relation between a mind and an object, we have to admit that it is really the mind's activity directed on the object. But that knowledge is not and cannot be treated as an activity in the strict sense we have already made sufficiently clear. Assuming that knowledge is a relation and that relation is not necessarily action, we may ask, what are the terms of the relation? If it be, as some realists think, a relation between a mind or subject, and an object, then we are to say that knowledge is presupposed in the subject and not produced by its relation to the object. For, what after all is the mind or the subject but a conscious and intelligent principle which not only exists but somehow experiences or knows its existence. Of course, the pure consciousness or

experience which abides in and constitutes the essence of the mind or the subject may be further manifested by its relation to (i. e. action on) an object. But this would give us not knowledge in its essential or metaphysical nature, but in its empirical character with which we are not here concerned. It is in view of this that we say that when James explains knowledge as a particular sort of relation into which portions of 'pure experience' may enter, he really posits some sort of knowledge in that 'pure experience' and does not really explain it. Some modern realists, of course, go to the length of saying that knowledge is a relation, not between a mind and an object, but between objects themselves. But if this be true, we do not see why a relation between any two objects does not constitute knowledge. The relation between a table and the book resting on it should be as much a case of knowledge as any other relation between any other objects. Of course, the neo-realists would say with the behaviourists that knowledge is the relation between two objects, of which one must be the nervous system. But if the nervous system be as material and unconscious as the table, we cannot explain the appearance of consciousness out of its relation to an object any

bit more clearly than we can, by the table's relation to a book. Even if it be granted that knowledge arises out of the relation between subject and object or that between two objects, a discerning critic would see that knowledge may arise out of a relation but is not itself that relation. A relation as such is not a cognition but a cognitum, i. e. an object of cognition. Of course, when a thing is *known*, it enters into what we call the knowledge-relation. But this assumes the subject's awareness of the thing as the basis of the relation. So the relation cannot constitute knowledge. As L. A. Reid has said, 'knowledge is not itself a relation, but the apprehension of relations.<sup>5</sup> Supposing that knowledge is a relation, we ask: How do we know it? It must be through some other knowledge which transcends the relation and is not identical with it. In fact, the subject-object relation does not produce knowledge but only serves to manifest it, just as the contact between the eye and a physical thing serves to manifest its colour but does not produce it.

The third view with regard to knowledge is that it is a quality. According to Descartes and his followers, thought or cognition is the essential attribute of the mind or the soul substance, just as extension is the essential

5. Cf. L. A. Reid : **Knowledge and Truth**, p. 189.

attribute of matter. The Samkhya and the Yoga systems look upon knowledge or cognition as a modification of *buddhi* or the intellect which is its substratum. The Ramanuja school of the Vedanta takes knowledge as an essential quality of the self. The self is not, as the Advaitins say, itself knowledge but is qualified by knowledge. Knowledge is not the essence of the self, but an attribute owned by the self. The Naiyayikas and the Vaisesikas also advocate the quality theory of knowledge. For them, knowledge is an attribute which inheres in the soul substance which, however, is separable from it.

But the quality theory of knowledge also involves certain difficulties. It cannot account for the reference to objects that is inherent in knowledge. A quality is an intransitive property of a thing. It hangs on the thing and does not point to anything beyond. It is in activity that we find a transition from one to an 'other'. For one thing, to act means aggressively to reach another. But at the same time we must not overlook the distinction between the 'ideal reference' to object that we find in knowledge and any form of physical process or transent causality. Knowledge refers to its object and is in this sense a cognition of the object.

It does not however move towards it. In it there is no transition from point to point in space. In so far as this is the case, the Nyaya is right in opposing the attempt to identify knowledge with activity. But the view of knowledge as a quality misses the other fact of objective reference that we find in knowledge. Knowledge seems to be what Reid calls 'a self-transitive process'. Its self-transcension is, as Hoernle points out, directly experienced by us. So it seems to occupy a position intermediate between quality and activity. To describe its self-transcension or objective reference and, at the same time, demarcate it from physical activity, we may say that knowledge is an 'ideal or theoretical activity'. But after all the characterization of knowledge as an activity, be it physical or ideal or theoretical, is only a symbolic description. While physical activity is real and intelligible, an 'ideal or theoretical activity' can hardly be made intelligible to us. Knowledge is, therefore, neither a quality, nor an activity, nor a relation.

In conclusion let us state our views with regard to the metaphysical nature of knowledge. While knowledge in its empirical character may be said to be the manifestation or apprehension of objects, in its metaphysical character, i. e. as a thing in

itself, it is a self-manifest and self-conscious reality. The one thing of whose reality we are definitely assured is our experience or thought. This experience not only *is* or exists but is also conscious of its existence. By knowledge we mean just this kind of self-conscious experience which may not experience any object, but still *is* and experiences itself. We may call it mind or self, if by that we do not mean any thing or substance, quality, action or relation, but a reality in which being means knowing, and of which thought and existence are inseparable and almost indistinguishable aspects. What we generally call the mind is only a complex of bodily and mental functions. Similarly, the self, as it is understood and explained by common sense, science and some philosophic system, is not the real self, but a hybrid of mind-body or the empirical self as a series or stream of consciousness. But underlying the body and the senses, the mind and the intellect as well as their functions there is in us an abiding and unchanging principle of consciousness which inspires and enlivens them and yet transcends them all. The real self is this living consciousness, for which to be means to be conscious. With regard to the self, we cannot say that '*it* is conscious', or it is conscious of *that*', for here

both 'it' and 'that' stand just for consciousness. As such, the self is no other than knowledge in its metaphysical character. If this be true, then knowledge may also be said to be the ultimate reality, of which we are immediately aware, since the self in us is the most indubitable fact and the presupposition of all other facts. Take away the self of a man, and see how for him the whole world of objects crumbles and is *non est*. That there may be or is knowledge in the sense explained here is not generally admitted by us either because we cannot realize the 'pure experience', which is neither subject nor object, i. e. an experience which is not the experience of an object by some subject, or because our language fails to explain it without bringing it under the subject-object relation. This is possibly the reason why even an idealist like Ramanuja doubts and denies the reality of 'pure consciousness'. But that we are somehow in possession of this rare experience is implied by all our thoughts, deeds and experiences. But for the reality of a transcendent consciousness, these could not be known and owned by us as *our* thoughts, deeds and experiences. Reserving a closer study of self or pure consciousness for a future occasion we may here point out how some Western idealists

make a close approach to the conception of knowledge as self or the ultimate reality. "Knowledge" says Bernard Bosanquet,<sup>6</sup> "is an essential form of the self-revelation of the universe; experience as a whole is the essential form". We have it from Hegel that thought is a living concrete reality and that behind the immediate thought

or experience of which we are aware, transcending it and yet immanent in it, there is a total concrete unity of thought which makes our individual experience real and intelligible. For Croce and Gentile mind or experience is the only thing which possesses reality; in fact reality is experience or mind or spirit.

(Concluded)

## THE STRANGER AND THE BARGE

*By Sister Savitri*

Sitting before dawn on the shores of the "Vast Expanse", I bring my mind to bend to those invisible waters still covered in mist, and drink the nectar of their purity.

The sky is pale. The flow is soft and slow. Silence pervades. — Oh! ... is that a dream? No forms, no colours, hardly an imperceptible sound of clapping waves from time to time. And possibly a touch of cool glow spreading beyond the stillness.

A stranger silently comes and sits by my side. His eyes fixedly gaze into the unknown. His cloth wrapped round his waist is white and bright. His face bears the same peace that infills the space. — As a God, he sits and meditates; with shoulders high and brow shining. And, in mute wonderment, I perceive the consciousness of that deep stillness and peace flowing in, flowing all over, everywhere. ...

... Thus, time elapsed. Space grew wider; light gently had come; the wonder of dawn was culminating in the approach of colours and mad glitters, dancing brightly in wild joy over the deep Infinite. But the sea was still as a milk flow under the vapoury sky above.

— "Brother, I softly begged of my companion, please Brother, tell me thy name, that of thy home and thine whereabouts." — His eyes shone with sparks of love and compassion, though the look still stared somewhere far, so far, no one knows whereto.... With a sweet smile he rose, lightly descended the steps and waited on the rock, feet in water. ... Waited, looking beyond,

6. Cf. *Logic*, Vol. II., p. 822

as a brilliant figure standing against the rising light. And, to my amazement, an empty barge, tossed as it were on the waves, came to anchor at his feet. — "Good bye," he said, stepping on to it and turning his radiant face towards me, "come soon, when time comes!" — And as I gazed at the frail embarkation waving to and fro on the waves of the great Ocean, I saw along with the millions of sparks scintillating on the pale azure of a new firmament now risen up, and, on the endless mirrors of the wavelets, the slender figure standing at the bow, carrying away an infinite smile of joy, and gliding to meet the dazzling but blissful Light that soon would burst over all things. ... And, smaller and smaller as it proceeded still farther and deeper through escaping mist and then light, the figure and the boat, both melted in Light Itself, as the Divine Fire rose from the horizon! ...

### SAINT TERESA OF JESUS

*By Wolfram H. Koch*

#### III

The years up to the miracle of the Transverberation were a terrible test for St. Teresa's spiritual sincerity. She had many visions and many spiritual experiences, but her fellow-nuns suspected her truthfulness and resented her longing for greater perfection than that of the average cloistered life. Her very confessors were quite unable to see how the grace of God could possibly be lavished on so unworthy and imperfect a soul, and believed her to be possessed by demoniac influences. Only after St. Teresa had the good fortune to meet Juan de Padranos of the Society of Jesus and St. Francis of Borgia, Duke of Candia, did she feel reassured and regain her confidence, especially as the latter advised

her not to struggle any longer against the visions and graces God sent her. But perhaps her greatest difficulty was her long, almost desperate attempt at reconciling the world and God, that had been the reason of her long waiting on the very threshold of true mystic life, and of the apparent complete failure of her efforts at true prayer.

For more than two years and a half St. Teresa had different partial or complete visions of the Humanity of Christ of His glorified body as she herself tells us. And during her readings she used to have the strong feeling that God was present in her.

In some of the *Relaciones*, simple notes jotted down for her confessors or some other spiritu-

ally advanced person, St. Teresa has left us very detailed and accurate accounts of these spiritual experiences. They show her great power of self-analysis and her wariness of all possibilities of self-deception and delusion, and form a very interesting and highly illuminating study.

As the miracle of the Transverberation in a certain respect forms the beginning of her definite 'conversion,' that intenser form of spiritual life and practice, the description of it had better be given in her own words.

St. Teresa says, 'The Lord wished me repeatedly to have the following vision: I saw an angel near me, at the left side, in a corporeal form which does not happen to me except by an extraordinary miracle. Although angels do appear to me often, I do not see them except by an intellectual vision analogous to that which I have told. This vision the Lord wished me to see in this way: He was not tall, rather small, very beautiful, the countenance so radiant that he seemed an angel of very high rank, of those who are only of fire. They must be those that are called Cherubim, for they do not tell their name. But I see well that in heaven there is such a difference between one angel and another, and between these and those, that I am not able to

tell it. I saw in his hand a long arrow which was of gold, with an iron point which seemed to me to have a little fire. It seemed to me that he drove it into my heart several times, and that that arrow penetrated to the very entrails. When he drew it back, it seemed to me that he pulled them with it and that he left me wholly burnt with a great love of God. The pain was so severe that it made me utter the sighs of which I spoke. And so excessive was the sweetness which that extreme pain gave me that I would not have wished it to be taken away, and that the soul can never be satisfied except in God. This is not a physical pain, but spiritual, although the body does participate in it, and even very strongly so. It is so sweet a caress between the soul and God that I supplicate His goodness to let it be tasted by those who will think that I am lying'.

The spiritual daughters of St. Teresa in the chapel of their convent of Alba de Tormes still show a material proof that is something really disconcerting: the very heart of the Saint clearly bearing the marks of the Transverberation is kept in a crystal vessel not embalmed but dried. The wound is still distinctly visible in the heart, and it is difficult to find any explanation for it except that it may be a kind of internal

stigmata.

For St. Teresa herself the reality of the miracle was altogether beyond question, an overwhelming spiritual fact; it formed the beginning of her great raptures and ecstasies. But she had still to struggle desperately for the perfection, the unchanging bliss that had been the most cherished dream of her childhood days, for not before the last ten years of her life did she attain the supreme stage of the spiritual marriage that forms the highest experience of Christian mystics and corresponds to the *Madhura Bhava* of the Bhakti-Path in India. Of this she gives us a clearly analysed description in the conclusion of her '*Moradas*' (*Mansions*).

Nevertheless from the period of her first great spiritual experiences and visions things began more and more to change their appearance to her eyes. The world has finally disillusioned her and no longer exists as an absolute reality. We know that even as a child St. Teresa used to repeat "*todo es nada*", all is nothing, but now all phenomena are no more than an empty dream and the "*todo es nada*" has become "*todo es sueno*", all is dream. St. Teresa realised that the only real living beings, those who had fully become alive, were those who lived the spiritual life, and all others were dead and had not yet awokened

to existence. She says very graphically, 'It is the former who seem to me to be the real living beings, whereas those who live the life of the world seem so dead to me that the whole world does not offer any company to my eyes. Everything I see seems a dream, everything I perceive with the eyes of the body a derision; on the other hand, what I have seen with the eyes of the soul is all that I desire, and as I find myself to be very far from it, it is death to me'.

As St. Teresa's spiritual experiences grew in intensity, the laxity prevailing at the Encarnacion became more and more unbearable to her. She planned to leave the convent and to go to another where stricter rules were observed. But she was not allowed to do so by her confessors. Later on, this proved to be a real blessing; for only by being forced to stay where she was, her great reform was finally brought about and her foundations became firmly established.

As in the case of many great mystics and devotees of the East and the West, St. Teresa's spiritual realisations on the one hand helped her in withdrawing from the world and its allurements and on the other, increased her dynamism. They forced her to greater outward activity, especially as her day was a time

of terrible struggle for the Church and menaced as she was by Islam and by the new ideas of the Protestant reformers.

To have been obliged to stay on at the Encarnacion was one of the most important events in her life. Thus alone was St. Teresa driven to undertake her work in right earnest in spite of the most terrible opposition on all sides, and to found the new convents of the Discalced on which her reforms were built up. She knew that the rising tide of Islam and of Protestantism could only be met and kept in bounds by the intensity and purity of the life led by a number of truly dedicated souls in the stillness and seclusion of the cloister for the welfare of mankind and her Church. Intensity of meditation and prayer had to be re-established to oppose the materialistic currents sweeping ever more dangerously over the West. And in her reformatory work St. Teresa found an utterly devoted pupil and ally in the person of Juan de Yepes better known as Juan de la Cruz who firmly stood by her in all her tribulations and struggles with the ecclesiastical authorities against the narrowness of whose views and jealousies she had to fight almost to the very day of her death.

In 1576 St. Teresa was ordered to lead the life of a recluse at Toledo by the nuncio Segu who

forbade any further founding of convents. During that time she only lived for the soul, the only thing of value in her eyes. Everything else is smoke, dream phantasmagoria. When Father Gracian gave her the order to write the book in which she wanted to explore the world of the spirit and the wealth of the soul, the soul appeared to her like a very precious diamond, like a gigantic pearl of the purest orient. And the period of seclusion at Toledo has certainly been the preparation for that wonderful treatise of soul-knowledge, *The Castillo Interior* or *Las Moradas* (*The Inner Castle* or *The Mansions*).

St. Teresa died in October 1582 at the age of 67. She was exhausted by her long illnesses, by her austerities and by the tremendous work entailed by her Foundations.

The last year of her life was characterised by an increase of tribulations. It is the year of her last Foundation, that of the Carmel at Burgos which roused such a great hostility as St. Teresa had not met with since her Foundations at Avila, Toledo and Seville.

At the end of her life she had but one desire viz., to rest among her beloved daughters of St. Joseph in her native city, but she was asked to undertake yet one more Foundation, the convent at Burgos. She went

there in spite of the opposition, the bad season, and the fatigue such a journey brought with it in her day. It was mid-winter and a winter that was particularly rainy and rigorous. Everywhere the rivers had overflowed. The roads were almost impassable. Twenty times St. Teresa and her nuns escaped drowning by a hair-breadth. St. Teresa arrived at Burgos in a pitiable state. She spat blood, and her tongue was paralysed for a time.

The municipal authorities and the archbishop were strongly opposed to her project and instead of being allowed to take possession of the house she had chosen for the future convent, they were asked to stay at the hospital of the Concepcion in an open attic, waiting for the authorisation of the archbishop. St. Teresa tried to bear all this very cheerfully, though in her ailing state this kind of lodging was not such as to bring about her recovery. Finally, the permission was given and the convent founded.

There is a touching story showing the infinite charity of St. Teresa towards the poor and the suffering. While she was staying at the Concepcion and feeling very ill, a friend had brought her some fine oranges. She took them and gave them to the sick of the hospital, saying that this did her more good and gave her greater

pleasure than eating them herself, although at that time oranges were almost the only food she could take.

After having founded the convent at Burgos St. Teresa hoped to be allowed to rest. She intended to leave for Avila and live there among her spiritual daughters in her beloved convent of St. Joseph. But her superiors sent her the order to proceed to Alba de Tormes to see the duchess there who insisted on offering the saint hospitality. When she arrived on the 20th. of September she was quite broken with weariness and very ill, and had to go to bed at once. The next day, she tried to get up, but had to lie down again. On St. Michael's day she had a violent haemorrhage. She herself felt she was going to die. On the 4th. of October on the feast of St. Francis she passed away

The night before, after having received the viaticum St. Teresa had said, 'Lord, it is time for me to go. May it be for my good. And may Thy Will be accomplished'. Then after having received the extreme unction, she lay down on one side, a crucifix in her hand. Her face became very beautiful, the expression extremely animated and happy. She had passed into ecstasy. Her face kept changing in expression,

became radiant as if beholding something marvellously beautiful. Then after two or three feeble sighs she died. Her beauty still increased. The wrinkles all disappeared.

The Europe of St. Teresa's times was the Europe of the breakdown of disciplines and spiritual tradition, of rebellion against the past, of insurgency into wider though not deeper fields of experience. And if the student succeeds in being at least a little age-conscious, the ideas and reforms of the greatest Spanish mystics like St. Teresa and Juan de la Cruz will stand out more clearly and definitely against the background of confusion of values. Sixteenth century Europe was in many points the parent of our present-day Europe, full of restlessness, of great creative impulse, dynamic, energetic, but having no design worth the name, full of tremendous activity without

a real director, the cradle of self-righteousness and that cocksure nationalism that has been celebrating and worshipping itself on an ever-growing scale, a Europe of divided allegiances, throwing overboard many worthless things and superstitions, but along with them, unfortunately, much of the deep spiritual tradition that had radiated for many years in earlier times from centres like Chartres and others and given steadiness of aim and a surer valuation of men and things to its peoples.

Let us pray in the beautiful words of Richard Crashaw addressed to St. Teresa:

"O thou untaunted daughter of desires!  
By all thy dower of lights and fires;

x                    x                    x

By the full kingdom of that final kiss  
That seized thy panting soul, and sealed thee His;  
By all the Heaven thou hast in him  
By all of Him we have in thee;  
Leave nothing of myself in me.  
Let me so read thy life that I  
Unto all life of mine may die!"

(Crashaw : St. Teresa)

*(Concluded).*

### TREMENDOUS TRIFLES

We come across an enigmatic and alarming saying of Christ, 'that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words shalt thou be justified and by thy words shalt thou be condemned'. If all flippant, irrelevant talk thus stands condemned we wonder how much of our life must prove

unworthy of us for such spoken irrelevances make up a good portion of our lives. But habit has glossed over these frequent foibles and we have come to acquiesce in their harmlessness. They may seem harmless enough, but this harmlessness is only in relation to mundane things; in relation to spiritual and eternal ends, they are extremely

harmful and are great impediments to spiritual progress.

As the vision of our final goal rises up in all its brightness, things that constitute life assume a different colour and dimension. Hence it is that we find spiritually advanced persons speaking of ordinary distractions, insignificant imperfections, or very trifling sins as great dangers in the path of the aspirant. Judged by ordinary human standards, they may seem of no account. But in relation to the light of God they have been found to be capable of completely eclipsing it, as a dust storm or a cloud can darken the sun. These seemingly trifling but truly tremendous imperfections are seen to have as great a power for evil in the soul as anger or greed or some obsessive apprehension. And spiritual men who can see these in true perspective have always warned aspirants against these. Says Sri Ramakrishna, 'If there is a small hole at the

bottom of a jar of water the whole water leaks out by and by. Similarly, if there be the smallest tinge of worldliness in the aspirant all his exertions come to naught'. The spiritual leaks away from us through such holes left carelessly open by us.

We have been lulled into a sort of self-complacency with our imperfections that we no longer assess them correctly. How elevating is the counsel of a modern seer, 'Do not fall into the mistake of thinking, as so many do when they lose their temper for a moment or speak some hasty angry word, that it does not matter; *it matters enormously*; it puts you back as the contrary puts you forward. It is these little daily acts which make progress so slow: years pass on, and comparatively only a few inches have been gained. The spiritual leaks away from us through these little holes which we are continually leaving open for its escape'.

**Let your deed be cousin to your word.**

**—Chaucer.**

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### The magic of the Name and the Number

'What is in a name? One is as good as the other', are words easily said. But names have a real power which is not so easily shaken off by the human mind. Call a man by a bad name and you find him up against you. Try a change in the names of our dear ones and the new names sound vacant and lifeless. The truth is, a name is not merely a name; it is something more. Often a name conjures up before our mind the image of a personality and all that it means to us. Hence there appears to be something spiritual in a name. What influence names have on the unseen elements of one's being and what a disharmony is set up therein, in the event of a change in names, are very picturesquely depicted by Dr. Bhabani Bhattacharya in a vignette from life in the May Number of the Aryan Path. The picture there is that of a man, to whom the change of the name of the Bus in which he daily travelled to his office, into a number, was nothing short of a calamity. By a fiat the Bus Syndicate have removed the names of buses replacing them by numbers and his bus, Sankhini had lost her beautiful name and has got A 24 instead!

The man is deeply moved by the catastrophe and moves others also by talking about it every day while travelling in the same bus.

'The question is spiritual' he begins. 'You have a wife, Sankhini. Since the day of marriage you have called her by that name. ... ... One day you are told your wife's name is Sarojini. Does it not seem strange calling her by the new name? ... ... Change her name and her whole personality is changed. Call her by a number, say A 24, and her very breath is different.' It smells of the prison or the police station when we address one another by numbers. Men revolt against being called by numbers, for they hate being labelled like that.

In man's dislike for being designated by numbers, there is something more than meets the eye. For he seems to protest against, to be righteously indignant at, an indignity meted out to him. Let us see what actually happens when we begin to count objects of any sort. We call into play the mind's power of abstraction. Selecting certain common features only of the

'objects' before us, we give a common name to that abstraction and terming it 'orange', number them as one, two and three. And when they are counted like that they are sterilized of their individuality and put in a stereotyped class of objects. It is exactly against this sterilization that man protests. For he feels he is being stripped of his individuality, his uniqueness that marks him off from others. The deeper implications of this phenomenon are beautifully discussed in an Editorial in the *Review of Philosophy and Religion*:

'... ... it is important for us to realize that it (numbering) involves a loss of contact with reality and that the real psychic motive which underlies the act is the desire to depotentize the object, to render it less dangerous by depriving it of that degree of reality. This is why numbering was always considered a magical operation in the ancient world. ... ... and in the Biblical account of the numbering of the Jews, Moses was forbidden by the God Jehovah to 'number' the sacred tribe ... ... For that would have denuded them of their angelic individuality.

We also resent being numbered, as we are afraid of losing over individuality and as we can never brook being 'classed'. We hug our names with gusto

and cannot suffer them being changed, as we think such change outrages our individuality. This clinging to our individuality and our zealous guarding of it are the result of our identification with our finite unreal selves which we have taken to be our real inner being. To lose the trinket of our individuality seems to us to lose everything. We are fully satisfied with our smallness and are mortally afraid of becoming 'big', of any expansion. That is why we insist on being called by a particular name and dislike being classed as 'men' even. To be classed as men would mean the sublimation of our individual personalities into a larger whole. This means expansion and hence is grating to our smaller selves. To be classed under a still larger whole, say, the animal kingdom is not only grating but adding insult to injury. The conclusion is forced upon us that the more we progress towards the *whole*, towards the infinite, the more militating it is to us. Ignorant as we are of our real infinite nature which is our Home, we protest against every step towards it; we resent every step in our regress to Reality. Inscrutable indeed is the magical power of Maya that makes us do so. We have to undo this magic so that we may

wend our way Home. We have to merge our individual personalities in the Impersonal, sink our names in the nameless Reality truly known in India as *anama* (nameless) and transform our desire for numbering things into the realization of *A-advaita*— not two, the One, the All.

Rightly does Sri Krishna Prem observe in the Editorial,

‘ By magic, the *mayik* number-

ing of “ I am one : may I be many”, was the universe created. The magic must be undone if the Way Home is to be trodden and the goal attained ... we must unlearn the habit of numbering things and summing them up in unreal classes. Nothing can be numbered because there are not even two things. Apart from the All, there is nothing, absolutely nothing’. This is the realization we have to come to.

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## MY FRIEND

When first looked upon the face of Pain,  
 I shrank repelled, as one shrinks from a foe  
 Who stands with dagger poised, as for a blow.  
 I was in search of pleasure and of Gain;  
 I turned aside to let him pass: in vain;  
 He looked straight in my eyes and would not go.  
 “ Shake hands”, he said, “ our paths are one, and so  
 We must be comrades on the way ’tis plain.”

I felt the firm grasp of his hand on mine;  
 Through all my veins it sent a strengthening glow.  
 I straightway linked my arm in his, and lo!  
 He led me forth to joys almost divine;  
 With God’s Great truth enriched me in the end,  
 And now I hold him as my dearest friend.

*From E. W. Wilcox’s Poems.*

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**An Introduction to the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo:** By Dr. S. K. Maitra. Published by the Culture Publishers. 25 A. Bakulbagan Row, Calcutta. Price Re. 1—6—0 Pp. 108.

The two main purposes which an introductory work serves are attraction and guidance. The explanation of the main features of the subject interests and attracts the general reader. The person who goes through the Introduction gets also the necessary acquaintance with the method and terminology of the subject as well as some suggestions and direction to the study of the sources. In achieving success in his attempt, the writer of an Introduction should possess a mastery of his subject, ability to distinguish the essential from the accidental, and great clarity in expounding the analysed facts. Judged from these standards Dr. Maitra's brochure is a commendable one, really helpful to the students of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy.

In philosophic profundity and intuitive comprehension of the truths of the highest order, the writings of Sri Aurobindo are never below the best writings of reputed philosophers like Hegel and Bergson. To convey his vast and splendid insight he has

worked out a linguistic medium, forceful, subtle, brilliant, and intricate. His writings, not inconsiderable even in bulk, demand broad philosophic culture and deep thought before they reveal the rich contents. In Sri Aurobindo one gets a brilliant synthesis of the exalted philosophic traditions of the East and the West presented in an original and satisfying mould of his own. He takes up what the greatest of the modern philosophers of the West have left off and gives it the finishing touch of Eastern wisdom. Thus he has struck new pathways in the realms of philosophic construction with the characteristic boldness of a seer and the ability of a most verile thinker. To the genuine student of Indian religious tradition, however, there lies more in his method of exposition than in the discovery. His is not a system, novel and heterodox, but based on the Vedic insight of the visishtadvaitic pattern, of the Vaishnava or Sakta type; it is a new reading of Visishtadvaita in the light of Evolution, and holds much to convince the man firmly planted on the earth. The intellectual and emotional appeal and the elevating spiritual power of Sri Aurobindo's system will be a force for years to come.

The book before us is constructed in five chapters dealing with the various distinct aspects of Sri Aurobindo's system of thought. Besides the explanations of the general principles, a clear definition of the various terms used in *The Life Divine* and other works form a striking feature of the work. It will be highly helpful to the understanding of Aurobindo's works in general. We congratulate the author heartily for publishing this book which must be welcomed by all who wish to study the sage of Pondichery. Printing and get-up of the book maintain the best standard, inspite of the depressing conditions of the day.

**The Upakhyanamala:** A Garland of Stories. Published by Messrs. G. A. Natesan and Co., Madras. Price: Re. 1-4-0.

When the present generation of Indians is appreciatively awakening to the many-sided treasures of our cultural heritage, attempts to popularize our ancient Classics by facilitating their study through 'edible' presentations like the present one are indeed commendable. Hence we heartily welcome this volume, the sixth in the series of condensations and selections from our scriptures and Puranas with English translation.

The book opens with an illuminating Foreword by Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer. The stories which are thirteen in number, are pen pictures of epic personalities like Harischandra Karna, Savitri, Sakuntala, Sibi, etc. presented in the poets' own words with English translation. Most of the stories are from the Mahabharata, some from the Ramayana and the rest from Puranas like the Siva Purana etc. The passages culled for building the stories, effectively bring out the personages as enshrining all that is lofty and sublime in the Aryan cultural tradition. Observes Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer in his Foreword, 'The story of Viswamitra and Sakuntala, the loyalty of Savitri victorious even over destiny and fate, the punishment that awaits pride, the extreme filial devotion of Puru to his father Yayati, the unforgettable life-history of Nala and Damayanti and the exhibition of stern rectitude and comprehensive kingly virtues by the epic figure of Harischandra...are among the gifts bestowed on the reader'.

We have great pleasure in recommending the book to all Libraries. The printing and get-up of the book is good.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Sarisha, Diamond Harbour, Report for 1940-'41.

The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at Sarisha, Diamond Harbour Road, Calcutta, is one of the few growing rural reconstruction centres of the Mission. From its humble beginnings in 1921 it has developed into a full-fledged educational institution.

**The Siksha Mandir** is a free Extended M. E. Agricultural school imparting instruction upto class VIII. The Ashrama, wedded as it is to a programme of rural uplift, has rightly laid stress on the study of agriculture. In the year 1940 it had 340 students on its rolls and a qualified staff of 15 teachers. The average monthly expenditure of the school was Rs. 370-14-6 during the years under report.

**The Sarada Mandir** is an Extended M. E. School able to teach girls upto class IX. In 1940 it was 125 strong and had 16 teachers on its staff. In 1938 a special Intermediate class was opened to provide facilities of higher education to girls especially to those who wanted to serve as teachers. It is indeed noteworthy that the Mandir gives due importance to physical culture and is in possession of most up-to-date arrangements for various kinds of games and sports for girls.

**The Charitable Dispensary** gave homeopathic treatment to 9594 cases in 1940. The total number of cases for the years under review was 17876. The Ashrama undertook Relief works also whenever opportunities arose.

The total income for the year 1940 under different heads was Rs. 15,599-7-9 and the expenses came to Rs. 15,201-11-11.

There is a monthly deficit of Rs. 200. Subscriptions to make up this deficit, buildings to meet the increasing demands on accomodation, and 6.52

acres of land for agricultural purposes, seem to be some of the immediate needs of the institution. While those who had seen the work vouch that the present usefulness of the institution is surpassed only by its future potentialities, we have every reason to hope that the activities of the Ashrama are sure to receive increasing support and encouragement from the munificent public.

### The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira.

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira which was started at Belur in 1941 to impart an all-round education to our youngmen after the manner of the ancient Gurukula enters the second year of its existence with the beginning of the new session in June, 1942. But considering the dangers and difficulties of continuing the college during the period of emergency in its old premises at Belur which falls within the emergency area No. I (declared by the Government), the Vidyamandira has been temporarily shifted to the spacious precincts of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama at Sargachi. The Ashrama is situated in a healthy, peaceful and safe rural area, only six miles off from Berhampore in the district of Murshidabad.

The college is affiliated to the Intermediate standard of the Calcutta University in English, Bengali (vernacular), History, Sanskrit, Logic Civics and Mathematics. All possible combinations except that of History with Mathematics are allowed. The College possesses a brilliant teaching staff. The Principal is a monastic member of the Order. The College reopens on the 2nd July, 1942 after the summer vacation at Sargachi, P. O. Mohula Dt. Murshidabad (Bengal). It will come back to its old premises at Belur as soon as the period of emergency is over.

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**TOWARDS GOD THROUGH HATRED**

The Supreme accepts us as we are, no matter how we approach Him; for all paths in which we may wander are His.

—*The Bhagavadgita.*

I

Religions have found that love of man for man involves the consequence of his harmony with the universe and have discovered in it the bright beginnings of man's love for God. This discovery has been made use of by religions to fulfil an important function, *viz.* the bridging of the gulf between the actual and the ideal, between man and God. The task is accomplished by the rather crude device of identifying them: Love of man for his kind is not only deified by religions as divine but is identified with God, thereby successfully inculcating in man love for God's creation and for harmony with the universe. Man's essential harmony with the universe being thus the alpha

and omega of all religions, love as the basic emotive force, as the bond that creates and strengthens this harmony claims recognition as the foundation of all religions, as the affirmation of the ultimate reality. Religions have hence built themselves on love and have proclaimed their opposition to hatred in a way that has condemned it as a God-eclipsing force. In the face of this fact it would be very near blasphemy to indulge in the irreligious paradox that through hatred also there is an approach to God, nay, that hatred has its laurels as glorious as or even more brilliant than those of love. It is of great consolation to us to find that Hindu sacred books come forward to share with us the sins of such blasphemy. They urge love for God as the path to perfection, but they also give instances that point to hatred as an equally or more effective path to God. We read in the

*Bhagavata* Vishnu sending down into the world his two attendants, Jaya and Vijaya under the curse of the Sanakas, 'blessing' them with hatred for the Lord. In answer to their request that they should not forget the hal-lowed feet of Hari even in hell, Vishnu ordains that both will go down as haters of Hari which will maintain the bond of love stronger than ever.

Although this instance goes to suggest hatred as a path like love, it stands to reason that love and hate being diametri-cally opposed means cannot pave for the same end. But it is surprising that a closer scrutiny reveals the opposition between love and hate as more an appear-ance than a reality. It is a matter of common experience that a person or thing engenders in us intense love at one time and fervent hatred at another, for no fault of or change in the person or thing. A clear under-standing of this phenomenon will show that hate and love are only two different manifesta-tions of one emotion, of one attitude towards a person or thing. The psychological approach which the *Bhagavata* makes while naively pointing to the potentialities of hatred as a Path throws useful light on this point. According to psychology the climax of emotions, of love, hate, anger etc, towards a person or thing is identity with him or

it. To king Parikshit this point was unintelligible. It was an enigma to him that the Gopis who looked upon Sri Krishna as their lover *par excellence* only and not as the Lord of the universe should achieve *moksha*. Sri Suka offers his rational explanation to this: Rivers taking different courses along land join the sea and come to have complete at-one-ment with the sea. In like manner, souls irrespective of the paths they take to, achieve identity with the Lord. He cites the instances of Kamsa attaining the Lord through fear of Hari, the Gopis through love, kings like Sisupala and Hiranyakasipu through hatred, the Vrishnis through relationship and sages like Narada through affection and friendship. Sri Suka then proceeds to reveal the philosophy that underlies these instances and to inculcate the validity of all paths to God, to Reality. He says that 'whether by cherishing hatred or eschewing Him altogether or through fear or friendship or love, one ought to contemplate Him so that one may not at all see Him as separate'. The vindication of this non-separateness is *yoga*, the purpose of these paths. We are really non-separate from Him. That we see ourselves as separate from Him is because of the illusion we are in. We must break through this illusion

and establish our oneness with him, our real nature. All means of reality which is life's foremost to this end whether they be inspired by love, hatred or anger, involving as they do, the contemplation of Him in one way or other are effective attempts at *yoga*, at the affirmation of our identity with Him, the central truth of our being and hence paths to perfection. The conclusion is naturally borne in upon us that all attitudes to reality are religious (in the sense that they are spiritual)—for the supreme purpose of all religions is the assertion of the Real in man.

## II

It is worth remembering here that such an all-comprehensive attitude to reality and the resultant recognition of the validity of all paths is the unique trait of Hinduism not shared by any other religion. The West is afraid of recognising hatred of God as a Path and conceding its claims to an aspect of reality, for they think that it would amount to making their God fearful and severe. They are anxious to preserve their *goody-goody* God and are unprepared to conceive of a God as the sublimation of opposites, in whom love and hate and other opposites meet and resolve into harmony. In the West they have failed to appreciate the metaphysical validity of all paths to reality; hence they have proved themselves incapable

of the all-comprehensive vision of reality which is life's foremost spiritual need. And this trans-forming influence has been missed not without unhappy results : In the absence of an all-comprehending reality as their life's inspiring ideal, they have drifted to an irrational and undefined defiance of God and disregard of moral restraints which are notoriously characteristic of the attitude of the present generation. Philosophers like Dr. McTaggart fail to appreciate this approach and chooses the 'more convenient and common path of accepting love as the basis of religion'.

A solitary voice is that of Mr. Lowes Dickinson who in his book, *Religion: A Criticism and a Forecast*, makes the nearest approximation to the above-mentioned view of reality which is pre-eminently Hindu. He goes on to say that any attitude to reality is religious, if it be greatly and imaginatively conceived, even if it should be an attitude which includes condemnation and defiance...'. What has been said above is to establish the truth that hatred also is an aspect of reality deserving equal status with love and to show their underlying real identity. It should not be construed as urging hatred as a Path for adoption, for that would be to accept hatred or anger as the basis for spiritual *sadhana*

which is rather unsafe. Nor are the instances given in the *Bhagavata* pointers in this direction. They point to something other than love and hate, to perfection which is beyond these opposites. All that we want to bring out after the Hindu sacred books is the essential identity of these opposites, the *dvandvas*, and their soundness as aspects of reality, not in themselves ideals, but paths to reality that is beyond them. The simultaneous characterization of reality that we meet with in Hindu scriptures by negative and positive epithets is really due to the fact that it transcends the relativity of these opposites and therefore inexpressible through language.

From what has been said two facts emerge: Hindu thought is anxious to forge a unity between opposites and to conceive them as converging to empty themselves into reality. This brings us to the effective method which Hinduism, the religion *par excellence* that it is, employs to fulfil its foremost function viz. revealing the central truth of man's being by the removal of the self-constructed illusion. It is to this end that the identity is forged between good and evil, between love and hate, so that it can by one single effort simultaneously remove the illusion of the *dvandvas* by affirming that reality is other than

both. That the highest ideal is Goodness which is beyond the opposites is emphasized time and again in Hindu scriptures and sacred books. Sri Krishna sums up his parting message to Uddhava in the words: 'It is bad to be tossed between the opposites. The good is to transcend them.'

### III

For picturing to the popular minds the rather abstract and lofty ideal of this transcendental reality, a reality that overflows the opposites and presses them into service, the Hindu sacred books employ an efficient technique. They present striking instances where the disequilibrium created by the forces of evil, the Asuras, in their attempt to dominate over the Devas (the forces of good) calls for the intervention of the supreme God. On such occasions the supreme God even wields the incredible with ease, quells the demoniac power and restores law and divine order in the universe proving the paramountcy of the good. We have the stories of Mura and Hiranyakasipu where these demons who are fed by the Gods with fabulous boons of power and invulnerability come to cherish an increasing hatred for the bestower of the boons and lose no time in turning upon him. Mura almost turns the world into a Satanic order and

even Brahma the bestower of his strength proves powerless to meet him. Mura at last confronts Vishnu who demonstrates the supremacy of the good by laying the demon down and restoring order. The hatred of Hiranyakasipu for Lord Narayana and his defiance for His authority break all records. The Lord had to pull himself together in peculiar combination to circumvent the guarantees of his safety for bringing him down. The story of Hari-Hara subduing the demon Guha is yet another instance of the Gods joining in an extraordinary combination to maintain the preponderance of the good over evil.

More than all, the two facts that stand out here and are of immediate interest to us in this context are the extravagant, suicidal goodness with which the Gods grant the boons to the Asuras and the inveterate hatred the latter bear for divine presence. The Asuras' defiance of the Gods, the bestowers of strength increased with their increasing power; material power put them in an illusion of invulnerability and in a spirit of challenge of goodness—even as the mounting material power within the reach of the modern man has made him overbearingly conscious of himself and derisive of divine purpose.

It is worthy of note that on all occasions Good is presented

in the Hindu sacred books not as replying evil with redoubled evil, but as returning goodness instead. The supreme God absorbs and transforms the Asuras into divinity, winning thereby a spiritual victory over evil, a victory without its vindictiveness, it being a vindication of the real preponderance of good over evil. It is the faith in such preponderance of goodness, in the sovereignty of the spiritual, that is the very breath of Hinduism. To Hinduism the good is the brightest reality even in the midst of the darkest evil. The significance to us of this faith in the real preponderance of the good cannot be exaggerated. For such faith not only sustains us in these dark days with hope but brings about a spiritual conversion in us by provoking us to the suppression of evil and for the manifestation of the good.

#### IV

One cannot fail to be struck by the parallel that the attitude of the Asuras to goodness obtains in the approach of the men of the present generation to God and religion. The disrespect and defiance of the modern man for things relating to God and religion has increased with the increasing lease of material power. This is most typical of the demoniac defiance of divine authority that grew with growing material prowess.

The men of the present-day drunk with the power they have amassed by scientific skill are not ready to recognise any higher authority and are derisive of higher values. What Sir Walter Lippman has called 'the acids of modernity' have not only proved corrosive of all foundations of the past, but seem to be equally so of moral and religious tradition. The facility with which the modern man dismisses God and the derision with which he looks on moral restraints are notorious. All these may naturally sound as a doctrine of despair. But the Hindu looks at it differently.

To the Hindu the present unrest is for the release of powers for better expression on higher planes set by spiritual values. Humanity's ultimate realization of itself and the world being a process of ever-increasing expansion of values the disappearance of existing standards is not to be viewed with alarm but to be welcomed as heralding a new orientation of values in life. To the Hindu increase of evil has not been an occasion for despair but for hope as that has always been an opportunity for divine incarnation and restoration of the godly order on earth. Has not the Lord held out his eternal promise of divine intervention in times of dire necessity and that promise shall never fail: ' Whenever there is a withering of virtue, O Son of

Bharata, and an uprising of lawlessness on all sides, then I manifest myself, for the salvation of the righteous and the destruction of such as do evil'. To take these words as containing a promise of a heavenly law-giver descending on earth on occasions to restore order would be to miss their profound subjective and uplifting import. They in fact urge us to put faith in, and strengthen the hands of the God within, of our own goodness which promises to preponderate itself over all evil and bring into being a divine order. In the light of this faith the unrest and disorder that we see around us far from being ominous symptoms of decay are but the inevitable concomitants of the undremit-of fullness, freedom and happiness that are now within the reach of our species. The travail is pregnant with the promise of greater fulfilment for which we have to pull ourselves together and go forward with high purpose and fine resolve. Professions and programmes are unhelpful. The power of faith in the supreme goodness that is the spirit within ourselves alone can urge and sustain us in the task of disciplining our passions of hatred and anger and sublimating them to forge a harmony that shall bid fair to usher in the new world to which all of us eagerly look forward.

# THE BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF THE ABSOLUTE

*By Dr. S. K. Maitra, M.A., Ph.D.,  
Benares Hindu University.*

## I

The aspect of Buddhism which I want to deal with in this paper is one which brings out the cultural continuity of Buddhism with the rest of Indian thought. This is its Absolutism which it shares with the other schools of Indian philosophy. Unfortunately, the aspect of Buddhism which has been most stressed in popular manuals is its phenomenism, relativism or negativism, but its other aspect, its Absolutism, has not received as much attention as it deserves. But if Buddhism is phenomenism, so far as its view of the world is concerned, it is no less Absolutism, so far as its deeper view, that is to say, its view of the nature of the Buddha or of Nirvana is concerned.

This fact is of considerable importance from the standpoint of the development of Indian philosophy, for if the earlier systems, such as the Sankhya or the Vedanta, had each its Absolute, it would have meant a break in the continuity of tradition if Buddhism had discarded all Absolutes. Ancient philosophy, whether in India or

in Greece, had always stuck to the conception of the Absolute, and Buddhist philosophy was no exception. The conception of the Absolute no doubt was different in the different systems, and these differences are of great interest for the student of the history of philosophy.

Be that as it may, it is an undoubted fact that all Buddhistic schools had their conception of the Absolute, however phenomenistic and relativistic they might be in their view of the world and its processes. In the schools of Hinayana the conception is more veiled than in those of Mahayana, but it exists all the same. The form in which it exists in the Hinayana is, indeed, from one point of view, of even greater interest than that in which we find it in the Mahayana. For, as we shall presently see, it affords a connecting link between the thought of India and that of ancient Greece.

In the Hinayana we have a very peculiar theory of reality. In the form in which we find it in the school of the Sarvastivadins, everything that happens is

credited with reality, but it is reality of a very peculiar nature, for there is nothing permanent about it; on the contrary, it is the very picture of impermanence and instability. In the system of the Vaibhasikas, which is a continuation of that of the Sarvastivadins, two types of reality are recognized, one phenomenal and impermanent and the other, eternal. Both these types of reality are analyzed into their elements, the former into seventy-two compound realities, of which eleven are material compounds, one is mind, forty-six are mental compounds, and fourteen non-mental compounds. The eternal realities are similarly analyzed into three uncompounded (*asamskrtā*) realities, namely, *Akusa* (Space), *Apratisamkhyanirodha* (unplanned destruction), which means merely the non-perception of objects which, owing to the absence of necessary conditions cannot be perceived, as, for example, when attending to one object, other objects are left unnoticed, and *Pratisamkhyanirodha* (deliberate destruction) or Nirvana, which is the final and eternal deliverance from bondage and is attained by following the noble eight-fold path as laid down in the Canon. The elements of the phenomenal and impermanent are also divided into the past, the present and the future, the future life. The complicated past and the future being concei-

ved as real as the present. As for the eternal realities, leaving aside *Apratisamkhyanirodha* which, as Keith points out, is of relatively small importance, we have two absolute realities, namely, Space and Nirvana.

Stcherbatsky considers the nature of Nirvana, as conceived by the Vaibhasikas, to be 'very similar to the reality of the Samkhya's undifferentiated matter (Prakrti); it is eternal, absolute, death' (*The Buddhist Conception of Nirvana*, pp. 27-28). He then goes on arguing that the Nirvana of the Vaibhasikas is nothing else than Matter. 'The state of Nirvana, as imagined by the Vaibhasikas', he continues, 'affords some points of similarity with that state of the universe which modern science imagines will exist when all energies will be worked out; they will exist, since energy itself (sc. *dharma-svabhava*) is eternal, but they will not work. A condition in which all energies (*samskaras*) are extinct cannot be spiritual. Of course, simple materialism, goes under the name of *ucchedavada*, against which Buddha is reported to have made an emphatic protest. But simple materialism in India, as elsewhere, is Nirvana at every death (*dehoccedo moksah*) without retribution for one's deeds in the future life. The complicated system of worlds imagined by

Buddha, through which the elements composing individual existences are gradually, one after another, reduced to a state of quiescence and extinction, until in final Nirvana all are extinct—is nothing but the realization of the moral law. The worlds are ‘produced’ by karma, which corresponds to a conception of evolution going on under the influence of an accumulation of moral merit. Simple materialism leaves no room for the working of this law. But neither does, according to Buddha, an eternal spiritual principle leave room for it. The moral law conducts through a very long process of evolution the living world into a state of final quiescence where there is no life, but something lifeless, inanimate. In this sense the Vaibhasika outlook resembles the materialism of modern science’. (*Ibid.*, pp. 28–29).

This view, we think, is extremely wrong. It is due, we believe, to a misunderstanding of the words ‘*yasmin sati cetaso vinickso bhavati*’ which the Vaibhasikas use to describe Nirvana. These words do not mean, as supposed by Stcherbatsky, passing into an inanimate materialistic condition. The more natural interpretation is that they refer to passing into a condition different from ordinary consciousness. There is no suggestion here of

inanimateness or materiality. The example of the lamp which the Vaibhasika gives makes this perfectly clear. The Vaibhasika is supposed to have said in reply to the Sautrantika’s objection that what is a mere extinction cannot be envisaged as an Ens, ‘Your interpretation of the words “extinction of desire”, as meaning extinct desire, is wrong. The right interpretation is the following one: That thing in which desire is extinct is called extinction of desire. It can then be asserted that when that ultimate entity which is called Nirvana is present, it means that every desire and consciousness are extinct (at final Nirvana). The extinction of the light of a lamp is a mere example. And even this example must be understood as an illustration of the idea that consciousness is quite extinct in something that continues to exist’. (See Stcherbatsky’s *Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*, Appendix, p. 191).

It is clear from this extract that what the Vaibhasika means by Nirvana is the fire that remains after the fuel is burnt out. This, however, far from meaning inanimate matter, is an ancient symbol depicting a mystic reality which remains after all its phenomenal manifestations are exhausted. We meet it in the Svetasvatara Upanishad (6. 19), where one of

the descriptions of the Absolute is that it is like a fire the fuel of which is burnt out (*daghendhanamivanalum*). It is a conception of the Absolute which is very similar to that of Heraclitus who pictured the Absolute as an Everlasting Fire. The extinguished fire illustrates the true nature of the fire even better than the blazing one. The Buddhist and Upanishadic conception of the extinguished fire as representing the Absolute Reality is even more mystical than the Heraclitean conception. It is a further carrying out of the idea which Heraclitus expressed in his cryptic phrases 'One out of all and all out of one' and 'The road up and down is one and the same' (For the meaning of these phrases, see Sri Aurobindo's *Heraclitus*, p. 21 *et seq* and p. 33). If Fire is the eternal principle at work in the evolution as well as in the dissolution of the universe, if the manifest and the unmanifest processes are nothing but expressions of the same eternal Fire, then it is evident that even in what we call extinguished fire, the principle of the fire is not extinguished—in fact, it can never be extinguished—only its existence is not apparent to us. Extinguished fire, therefore, represents the true inward essence of fire, that which shines all the more brightly when its apparent manifestations dis-

appear. Fire as the symbol of the Absolute is a characteristic feature of ancient Aryan thought, and Hinayana Buddhism, in representing Nirvana as extinguished fire, is simply following the old Aryan tradition. Stcherbatsky's view, therefore, that the Nirvana of the Vaibhasikas is nothing else than matter, is clearly mistaken.

The Sautrantikas occupy a position midway between the position of the Vaibhasikas and that of the Mahayana. Though they seem to insist that Nirvana means only the end of the process of life, without there being any lifeless substance left as a residue yet they do not deny Nirvana, for, as Stcherbatsky says, 'there is no Buddhism without Nirvana'. The later Sautrantikas allied themselves with the Mahayanists, and thus we have hybrid schools, known as Sautrantika-Yogacaras and Madhyamika-Sautrantikas. It is not surprising, therefore, that in this doctrine of Nirvana they adhered closely to the views of the Mahayana. Stcherbatsky mentions that from Tibetan sources we know they admitted the doctrine of Dharmakaya.

We see therefore that in the Hinayana schools, Nirvana, far from meaning a lapse into the condition of matter, points on the contrary, to a mystic Absolute whose nature is ineffable. But it is in the Mahayana

schools that the idea of an infable Absolute is fully developed.

The Mahayanist conception of the Absolute, as we find it in the Vijnanavada or the Yogacara school, is very clearly stated in Asvaghosa's work *Sraddhotpadasastram*, a translation of which (the original Sanskrit work is lost) has been made by Suzuki from the Chinese version of the work under the title *Awakening of Faith*. The Absolute is called in this book Tathata (Suchness) or Bhutatathata (Suchness of Being). It is an infable reality whose nature cannot be exactly described and which is called for this reason Suchness. But although its nature cannot be defined by means of any language we can, if we follow Asvaghosa, say this much about it that it is the 'oneness of the totality of things (*dharma-dhatu*), the great all-including whole, the quintessence of the Doctrine' (*Awakening of Faith*, Suzuki's translation, pp. 55-56). Asvaghosa further characterizes it as follows: 'In the essence of suchness, there is neither anything which has to be excluded nor anything which has to be added'. He notices a possible objection to this way of characterizing it, and therefore says: 'Now the question arises, "If that be so, how can all beings conform to and have an insight into suchness?" The answer is: As soon as you under-

stand that when the totality of existence is spoken of, or thought of there is neither that which speaks nor that which is spoken of, there is neither that which thinks nor that which is thought of; then you conform to suchness, and when your subjectivity is thus completely obliterated, it is said to have the insight. Again there is a twofold aspect in suchness if viewed from the point of view of its explicability. The first is trueness as negation (*sunyata*) in the sense that it is completely set apart from the attributes of all things unreal, that it is the real reality. The second is trueness as affirmation (*asunyata*), in the sense that it contains infinite merits, that it is self-existent. And again, by trueness as negation we mean that in its metaphysical origin it has nothing to do with things defiled (i. e., conditional), that it is free from all signs of distinction existing among phenomenal things, that it is independent of unreal, particularizing consciousness. Thus we understand that suchness is neither that which is existence, nor that which is non-existence, nor that which is not at once existence and non-existence; that it is neither that which is unity, nor that which is plurality, nor that which is not at once unity and plurality'. (Ibid, pp. 58-59).

These long quotations from Asvaghosa show clearly how

similar is his conception of Tathata to the Vedantic conception of Brahman. It is impossible to characterize Tathata by any of our finite categories, existence, unity, plurality, etc. It is therefore both existence and non-existence ; it is both unity and plurality and also neither unity nor plurality. This is also the way in which the Upanishads have characterized Brahman, for Brahman is described purely negatively as

*asabdam, asparsam, arupam, avyayam* and also positively as *anoraniyan, mahato mahiyam*. Brahman is further characterized as *yato vaco nivartante aprapya manasa saha*, thus showing that the simultaneous characterization of Brahman by negative and positive epithets is really due to the fact that its nature is inexpressible through language and unapproachable by thought.

(To be Continued.)

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Why this attitude of an idler, that if realisation is not possible in this birth, it will come in the next ? There should not be such sluggishness in devotion. The goal can never be reached unless a man makes his mind strong, and firmly resolves that he must realise God in this very birth, nay, this very moment. In the countryside, when cultivators go to purchase bullocks, they first touch the tails of the animals. Some of the bullocks do not make any response to this. Rather, they relax all their limbs and lie down on the ground. At once the cultivators understand them to be worthless. There are some others that jump about and behave violently the moment their tails are touched ; and the peasants can immediately know that they will be very useful. Their choice is then made from among this active type. Slothfulness is not at all desirable. Gather strength, firm faith, and say that you must realise God this very moment. Then only can you succeed.

—Sri Ramakrishna.

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## THE ETHICS OF ADVAITA

*By Prof. M. Hiriyanna, M.A.,*

The subject-matter of all religion and philosophy is reducible to three elements, *viz.* God, the *jiva* or the individual self and the physical world. Monistic doctrines, believing as they do in the ultimacy of only one of them, explain the other two as in some way derived from it. The Advaita of Sankara goes a step farther, and teaches that all of them are but seeming derivatives from a fourth transcendental entity, called Brahman or the Absolute. The principle that accounts for this seeming diversification of what is the sole reality is Maya; and any one who realises this truth in his own experience attains, according to Sankara, the final aim of life, *viz.* salvation. The conception of Maya thus forms the pivotal point of Advaita, on its theoretical as well as on its practical side. Our purpose here is to find out the most important of its implications to practical life. We shall not accordingly refer to its place in the theory of Advaita, except in so far as it is necessary for our present purpose.

Broadly speaking, the principle of Maya may be looked at from two standpoints: one cosmic, and the other individual.

From the former point of view, it is the source as well as the sustaining ground of the whole of the physical universe. In this respect, it resembles what is termed Prakrti in the Sankhya, the only difference being that while Prakrti is conceived as real there, Maya is not so regarded here. From the other point of view, it is the cause of the delusion under whose influence man engages himself in the various activities of life, in the hope of securing happiness or avoiding misery. As our aim is to dwell not so much upon the nature of the world as upon its meaning for man, it is with the latter or the individual aspect of Maya that we shall be chiefly concerned here. Now a delusion is a false or wrong belief; and it always implies a failure, on the part of the person who entertains it, to realise the exact nature of a given fact. He who sees a serpent where there is only a rope should necessarily be unaware that it is a rope. But delusion is not merely a failure to realise the truth about a given fact; it also means the beholding in its place of something else as, for example, the serpent in our illustration. Maya too, in deluding man,

similarly obscures the ultimate reality from him, and shows in its place the physical world, which, as we have just stated, is derived from its cosmic side. From the standpoint of any *jiva* this world may be divided into two parts: one that constitutes its adjuncts or 'accompaniments', such as the internal organ (*antahkarana*), the body and the organs of sense; and the other, its objective environment in its infinite variety. But we should not forget that both these parts, being the effects of Maya are alike false. The *jiva*, ordinarily speaking, identifies itself with the former set of objects and, thereby losing sight of its true nature, comes to feel that it is embodied and finite. A natural outcome of this feeling of finitude is that it regards the whole of its environment, including the other *jivas* similarly fancying themselves to be embodied, as entirely distinct from itself. It develops likes and dislikes for a small portion of it, and assumes an attitude of indifference towards the rest. The consequences of Maya, so far as any individual is concerned, may thus be stated as threefold: First, it veils the truth about the ultimate reality from him; secondly, it gives rise to certain factors which consti-

tute his constant accompaniments and lead him to the wrong belief that he is separate from others; and lastly, it provides him with an environment, physical as well as social, to which he reacts in diverse ways.

Let us find out which consequence precisely it is that subjects man to all the vicissitudes of life. It cannot be the first viz. the obscuration of the ultimate reality for, in deep sleep, it should be assumed to persist since man does not come to know the truth about it then; but yet he transcends all the hopes and fears of life in that state, though it may be only for the time being. 'Sleep', it has been said, 'makes us all *pashus*'. Nor can the last be their cause for in deep sleep again, though the environment continues to exist as youched for by those that are awake,<sup>1</sup> it occasions none of the errors or confusions of life. The sting of Maya must therefore lie in the second of its consequences, particularly the *antahkarana*, which accounts for man's false belief in his finitude and which, because that belief is absent in sleep, must be supposed to have become latent then. Delusion starts only when the internal organ, with or without its several accessories like the organs of sense,

<sup>1</sup> Occasionaly a solipsistic interpretation of Advaita is given, according to which the belief in the existence of other selves is also an illusion; but we are confining our attention here to the doctrine as it is commonly understood.

reemerges, originating the idea of *aham* or the ego. Thus the direct or immediate cause of operative delusion is not Maya in its aspect of veiling the ultimate truth from man or of giving rise to his environment, whether social or physical, but only in its aspect of imposing on him the egoistic feeling, with its implication of the contrast of 'I' and 'You'. If thus the feeling of egoism be the source of all evil or, to state the same in different words, if selfishness, be sin, it follows that he who desires to free himself from it should do his utmost to rise above that feeling by renouncing all private or personal interests. This is the first practical lesson we have to draw from the conception of Maya.

But it represents only the ascetic ideal of self-denial. Some, no doubt, have held, both in the East and in the West, that the highest aim of life is to reach this negative ideal, and that morality therefore consists wholly in repressing one's desires and appetites. But the Advaita, though it recognises self-conquest as a necessary stage in life's discipline, maintains that, owing to its negative character, it cannot stand for the ultimate purpose of human life. Life, according to this school, must have a positive aim; and we find it given to us in the character of the final

truth which Maya conceals from man. That truth is the *jiva's* fundamental identity with Brahman, as taught in the Upanishadic formula 'That thou art' (*tat tvam asi*). Man is therefore more than the finite or narrow self which he ordinarily takes himself to be. He is really the universal self, but only hidden behind a finite guise. It is the grasping of this wider significance of the self that forms the positive aim of Advaita. But by 'grasping' here, if it should become a living influence on everyday conduct, we must understand not merely an intellectual acceptance of the truth about the self but also a ratification of it by one's own experience. Such a consummation, however, is within the reach of but a few, particularly on account of the arduous nature of the intellectual (including *yogic*) discipline necessary for it. Ethical conduct does not permit of any such restriction; and whether or not a person feels himself fit to strive for the highest, he has to live a morally worthy life. Hence it is necessary to restate the Upanishadic truth in a form which shows clearly its direct bearing on such a life. If every individual self is at bottom the same as Brahman, it follows that the selves cannot, in the end, be different from one another.

This way of stating the truth discloses to us at once that there is no basis whatsoever in actual fact for any discrimination in our attitude towards others and that we should therefore cherish the same kindly feeling, or bear equal love, for all. It is the cultivation of such love that constitutes the second and positive lesson which we may deduce from the conception of Maya.

There are two features of this lesson of love, as taught in Advaita, to which attention should now be specifically drawn. The object of all higher religions alike is to develop the spirit of love in man; but in many, its scope is limited to mankind. All conscious limitation, however, implies preference which eventually rests on some egoistic consideration or other. Here, on the other hand, it extends to the whole of sentient creation, so that the moral outlook becomes greatly enlarged. To the common precept, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' is here added, to borrow Gandhiji's words, 'And every living being is thy neighbour'. This perfect catholicity of interest is the outcome of the belief that not only man but other living beings also have souls, though they may not have reached the same degree of spiritual growth. This widening of its range makes the love universal in its charac-

ter; and it consequently banishes not only its opposite of hatred but also that other attitude of indifference which, as it has been rightly described, is 'farther removed from love than hatred'. But even in this extended form, the lesson of love is common to all the Indian doctrines, and not special to Advaita. The anthropocentric view which prevails in the West, that man is a privileged creation, with a soul denied to lower forms of life, and which corresponds in ethics to the long-explored geocentric view in astronomy, was never known in India. What is peculiar to the Advaitic conception of love, and on which we like to lay special emphasis is that it is not of the type usually understood from the term, *viz.* what one bears towards another. It is very much deeper, for it is based on the belief not in the mere fellowship of all living beings, but in their fundamental oneness. In fact, it is love in its intensest form, because it signifies loving one's neighbour not as *another* but as *oneself*. And the Advaita assigns the best conceivable reason for such love by denying the ultimacy of the commonly felt distinction between one sentient creature and another. All other forms of love, according to the Upanishads, are but casual flashes of it. Thus the love whose cultivation the Advaita

commends is deeper as well as wider than what it is ordinarily conceived to be.

To sum up: While the conception of Maya, in one of its main aspects, implies the need for self-denial and is negative; in another, it means self-affirmation and is positive. Only we should remember that the self which is denied is the narrow or egoistic self, and that which is affirmed in its place is the universal one. Together, these two lessons of self-denial and love, in the exalted sense to which reference has just been made, constitute the sum of Advaitic morality. It is, however, found described in Sanskrit works in a ritualistic terminology as consisting in the total abnegation of *karma-karmas*, scrupulous adherence to *nuya-*

*karmas* and so forth. We have deduced it here directly from the metaphysics of the system, and expressed it without reference to the historical accidents amidst which it was formulated. But the conception is essentially the same. We have also detached it, we should add, from the ideal of *moksha* in reference to which it is commonly set out in old works, for our concern here has been not with the Advaita doctrine as a whole but only with a single, though from the standpoint of the plain man the most important, phase of it. It is hoped that this way of viewing it will help to make the ethical appeal of Advaita clearer and more direct to the modern mind.

Though all religions have taught ethical precepts, such as, "Dont kill, do not injure; love your neighbour as yourself" etc., yet none of these has given the reason. Why should I not injure my neighbour? To this question there was no satisfactory or conclusive answer forthcoming, until it was evolved by the metaphysical speculations of the Hindus who could not rest satisfied with mere dogmas. So the Hindus say, that this Atman is absolute and all-pervading, therefore infinite. Also each individual soul is a part and parcel of that universal soul, which is infinite. Therefore in injuring his neighbour, the individual actually injures himself. This is the basic metaphysical truth underlying all ethical codes.

—Swami Vivekananda.

## THE MISSION OF THE HINDUS

Before trying to find out where we are all agreed, the common ground of our national life, one thing we must remember. Just as there is an individuality in every man, so there is a national individuality. As one man differs from another in certain particulars, in certain characteristics ; and just as it is the mission of every man to fulfil a certain purpose in the economy of nature, just as there is a particular line set out for him by his own past Karma, so it is with nations—each nation has a destiny to fulfil, each nation has a message to deliver, each nation has a mission to accomplish. Therefore, from the very start, we have to understand the mission of our race, the destiny it has to fulfil, the place it has to occupy in the march of nations, the note it has to contribute to the harmony of the races. In our country, we hear as children, stories of how some serpents have jewels in their heads and whatever one may do with the serpent so long as the jewel is there, the serpent cannot be killed. We hear stories of giants and ogres who had souls living in certain little birds and so long as the bird was safe, there was no power on earth that could kill these giants; you

might hack them to pieces, or do what you liked to them, the giants could not be killed. So with nations, there is a certain point where the life of a nation centres, where lies the nationality of the nation, and until that is touched, that nation cannot die. In the light of this, we can understand the most marvellous phenomenon that the history of the world has ever known. Wave after wave of Barbarian conquest has rolled over this devoted land of ours. 'Allah Ho Akbar!' has rent the skies for hundreds of years, and no Hindu knew what moment would be his last. This is the most suffering and the most subjugated of all the historic lands of the world. Yet we still stand practically the same race, ready to face difficulties again and again if necessary ; and not only so, of late there have been signs that we are not only strong but ready to go out, for the sign of life is expansion.

We find today that our ideas and thoughts are no more locked up within the bounds of India, but whether we will it or not they are marching outside, filtering into the literature of other nations, taking their place among those nations and in some, even getting a commanding, dictatorial position. Behind this

we find the explanation, that the great contribution to the sum-total of the world's progress from India is the greatest, the noblest, the sublimest theme that can occupy the mind of man—it is philosophy and spirituality. Our ancestors tried many other things ; they, like other nations first went to bring out the secrets of external nature as we all know, and with their gigantic brains that marvellous race could have done miracles in that line of which the world could have been proud for ever. But they gave it up for something higher ; something better rings out from the pages of the Vedas :—"That science is the greatest which makes us know Him who never changes". The science of nature, changeful, evanescent, the world of death, of woe, of misery, may be great, great indeed ; but the science of Him who changes not, the Blissful One, where alone is peace, where alone is life eternal where alone is perfection, where alone all misery ceases,—that according to our ancestors, was the sublimest science of all. After all, sciences that can give us only bread and clothes and power over our fellowmen, sciences that can only teach us how to conquer our fellow beings, and rule over them, which teach the strong to domineer over the weak,—those they could have discovered if they wished ; but

praise be unto the Lord, they caught at once the other side, which was grander, infinitely higher, infinitely more blissful, till it has become the national characteristic, till it has come down to us, inherited from father to son for thousands of years, till it has become a part and parcel of us, till it tingles in every drop of blood that runs through our veins, till it has become our second nature, till the name religion and Hindu have become one. This is the natural characteristic, and this cannot be touched. Barbarians with sword and fire, barbarians bringing barbarous religions, not one of them could touch the 'Jewel', not one had the power to kill the bird which the soul of the race inhabited. This, therefore, is the vitality of the race and so long as that remains there is no power under the sun that can kill the race. All the tortures and miseries of the world will pass over without hurting us, and we shall come out of the flames like Prahlada, so long as we hold on to this grandest of all our inheritances, spirituality. If a Hindu is not spiritual I do not call him a Hindu. In other countries a man may be political first, and then he may have a little religion, but here in India the first and the foremost duty of our lives is to be spiritual first, and then if there is time, let other things

come. Bearing this in mind we shall be in a better position to understand why, for our national welfare we must first seek out at the presentday all the spiritual forces of the race, as was done in days of yore, and 'will be done in all times to come. National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune.

Let them talk of India's regeneration as they like ; let me tell you as one who has been working—at least trying to work—all his life—that there is no regeneration for India until you be spiritual. Not only so, but upon it depends the welfare of the whole world. For I must tell you frankly that the very foundations of western civilisation have been shaken to their base. The mightiest buildings, if built upon the loose foundations of materialism, must come to grief one day, must totter to their destruction, some day. The history of the world is our witness. Nation after nation has arisen and based its greatness upon materialism, declaring man was all matter. Aye, in western language a man gives up the ghost, but in our language a man gives up his body. The western man is a body first, and then he has a soul ; with us a man is a soul and spirit and he

has a body. Therein is a world of difference. All such civilisations, therefore, as have been based upon such sand-foundations as material comfort and all that, have disappeared one after another, after short lives, from the face of the world ; but the civilisation of India and the other nations that have stood at India's feet to listen and learn, namely, Japan and China, live even to the present day, and there are even signs of revival among them. Their lives are like that of the phoenix, a thousand times destroyed, but ready to spring up again, more glorious. But a materialistic civilisation once dashed down, never can come up again ; that building once thrown down, is broken into pieces once for all. Therefore have patience and wait, the future is in store for us.

Just as in the case of individuals, if the principle of life is undisturbed, if the principal function of that individual life is present, any injuries received as regards other functions are not serious—they do not kill the individual, even so, as long as this principal function of our life is not disturbed, nothing can destroy our nation. But mark you, if you give up that spirituality leaving it aside to go after the materialising civilisation of the west, the result will be that in three generations you will be an extinct

race; because the backbone of the nation will be broken, the foundation upon which the national edifice has been built will be undermined, and the result will be annihilation all around.

Well, one Indian scholar asks: "What is the use of keeping the soul of the nation in religion? Why not keep it in social or political independence, as is the case with other nations?" It is very easy to talk like that. If it be granted, for the sake of argument, that religion and spiritual independence and soul, God and Mukti, are all false, even then see how the matter stands. As the same fire is manifesting itself in different forms, so the same one great Force is manifesting itself as political independence with the French, as mercantile genius and expansion of the sphere of equity with the English, and as the desire for Mukti or spiritual independence with the Hindu. Be it noted that by the impelling of this great Force, has been moulded the French and the English character, through several centuries of vicissitudes of torture; and also by the inspiration of that great Force, with the rolling of thousands of centuries, has been the present evolution of the Hindu national character. I ask in all seriousness—Is it easier to give up our national character evolved out of thousands of centuries, or your

grafted foreign character of a few hundred years? Why do not the English forget their warlike habits and give up fighting and blood-shed, and sit calm and quiet, concentrating their whole energy on making religion the sole aim of their life?

The fact is that the river has come down a thousand miles from its source in the mountains; does it or can it go back to its source? If it ever tries to trace back its source, it will simply dry up by being dissipated in all directions. Any how the river is sure to fall into the ocean, sooner or later, either by passing through open and beautiful plains, or struggling through grimy soil. If our national life of these ten thousand years has been a mistake, then there is no help for it; and if we try now to form a new character, the inevitable result will be, that we shall die.

In this land are, still, religion and spirituality, the fountains which will have to overflow and flood the world to bring in new life and vitality to the western and other nations, which are now almost borne down, half-killed and degraded by political ambitions and social scheming. From out of the many voices, consonant and dissentient, from out of the medley of sounds filling the Indian atmosphere, rises up supreme, striking and full, one note, and that is renunciation. Give up; That is the

watch-word of the Indian religions. This world is a delusion of two days. The present life is of five minutes. Beyond is the Infinite, beyond this world of delusion; let us seek that. This continent is illumined with brave and gigantic minds and intelligences which even think of this so-called infinite universe as only a mudpuddle; beyond and still beyond they go. Time, even infinite time, is to them but non-existence. Beyond and beyond time they go. Space is nothing to them, beyond that they want to go, and this going beyond the phenomenal is the very soul of religion. The characteristic of my nation is this transcendentalism, this struggle to go beyond, this daring to tear the veil off the face of nature and have at any risk, at any price, a glimpse of the beyond.

That is our ideal, but of course all the people in a country cannot give up entirely. Do you want to enthuse them? Then here is the way to do so. Your talks of politics, of social regeneration, your talks of money-making, and commercialism all these will roll off like water from a duck's back. This spirituality is then what we have to teach the world. Have we to learn any thing else, have we to learn any thing from the world? We have perhaps to gain a little in material knowledge, in the power of organisation, in the ability to

handle power, in bringing the best results out of the smallest of causes. This perhaps to a certain extent we may learn from the West. But if any one preaches in India the ideal of eating and drinking and making merry, if any one wants to apotheosise the material world into a God, that man is a liar; he has no place in this holy land, the Indian mind does not want to listen to him. Aye, in spite of the sparkle and glitter of western civilisation, in spite of all its polish and its marvellous manifestation of power, I tell them to their face, that it is all vain. It is vanity of vanities. God alone lives. The soul alone lives. Spirituality alone lives. Hold on to that.

Yet perhaps some sort of materialism, toned down to our own requirements, would be a blessing to many of our brothers who are not yet ripe for the highest truths. This is the mistake made in every country and every society, and it is a greatly regrettable thing that in India where it was always understood, the same mistake of forcing the highest truths on people who are not ready for them, has been made of late. My method need not be yours. The Sannyasin as you all know, is the ideal of the Hindu's life and everyone by our Shastras is compelled to give up. Every Hindu who has tasted the fruits of this world must

give up in the latter part of his life, and he who does not is not a Hindu, and has no more right to call himself a Hindu. We know that this is the ideal—to give up after seeing and experiencing the vanity of things. Having found out that the heart of the material world is a mere hollow, containing only ashes, give it up and go back. The mind is circling forward, as it were, towards the senses and that mind has to circle backwards; the Pravritti has to stop and Nivritti has to begin. That is the ideal. But that ideal can only be realised after a certain amount of experience. We cannot teach the child the truth of renunciation; the child is a born optimist; his whole life is in his senses; his whole life is one mass of sense enjoyment. So there are childlike men in every society, who require a certain amount of experience, of enjoyment to see through the vanity of it, and then renunciation will come to them. There has been ample provision made for them in our books; but unfortunately, in later times, there has been a tendency to bind every one down by the same laws as those by which the Sannyasin is bound, and that is a great mistake. But for that, a good deal of the poverty and the misery that you see in India need not have been. A poor man's life is hemmed in and bound down by tremendous spiritual and ethical laws for which he has no use. Hands off! Let the poor fellow enjoy

himself a little, and then he will raise himself up and renunciation will come to him of itself. Perhaps in this line we can be taught by the western people, but we must be cautious in learning these things.

'Learn good knowledge with all devotion from the lowest caste. Learn the way to freedom even if it comes from a Pariah by serving him. If a woman is a jewel, take her in marriage even if she comes from a low family of the lowest caste.' Such is the law laid down by our great and peerless legislator, the divine Manu. This is true. Stand on your own feet and assimilate what you can; learn from every nation, take what is of use to you. But remember that as Hindus everything must be subordinated to our own national ideals.

Therefore, my friends, the way out is that first and foremost we must have a firm hold on spirituality—that inestimable gift handed down to us by our ancient forefathers. Whether you believe in spirituality or not, for the sake of the national life, you have to get a hold on spirituality and keep to it. Then stretch the other hand out and gain all you can from other races, but everything must be subordinated that one ideal of life and out of that a wonderful, glorious, future India will come—I am sure it is coming—a greater India than ever was.

From *Swami Vivekananda's Speeches.*

## KANNAPPAR, THE HUNTER SAINT OF TAMIL LAND

*By "Shiva"*

Amidst the galaxy of God-intoxicated *bhaktas* who have shed light and lustre on Bharatavarsha St. Kannappar stands unique. Though he is traditionally included amongst the sixty-three Saiva saints of Tamil land the startling rapidity of his spiritual evolution and the intensity of his devotion mark him apart. His spiritual blossoming bears eloquent testimony to the futility of ritualistic paraphernalia for one on the higher planes of ecstatic devotion and offers a deep assurance of the transformative power of divine grace. In this regard, he is the Saiva saint *par excellence*; for according to Saivism divine grace alone can vouchsafe perfection to the soul—a truth vividly illustrated in the spiritual evolution of St. Kannappar. His 'conversion' was sudden: Within the incredibly short span of six days he achieved what it took lives for others to achieve and was at his journey's end, at one with the Infinite. Apart from his early life and the circumstances of his illumination we have no account either of his spiritual ministrations or of his life after the realisation. St. Sekkilar whose name as the biographer of the Tamil Saiva saints is too well-known to need

introduction, gives us in his *Peria Puranam* a picturesque and faithful account of the divine drama enacted in the sylvan outskirts of a South Indian village.

Born in the hamlet of Uduppur, of great antiquity, as the son of an influential and prosperous huntsman chieftain, Thinnanar—for that was the saint's early name—was brought up amidst the wild luxuries of the wood and the glen. He lived the ideal hunter's life, excelling in the arts of archery and spearing and developing within his rugged frame, courage and daring. Till his sixteenth year nothing of the uncommon was perceptible in him, nor any sign of the coming storm that was to demolish his whole mental horizon and allow the flood of divine light within.

In the depths of the woodland over which his father held sway there was a hill with an ancient image of Lord Shiva on its summit. During the time of the narrative, this image was being regularly worshipped by Shivakosariyar, a devout brahmin of the locality. This hill with a meandering stream adorning its foot was the scene of Thinnanar's enlightenment.

It so happened that one sultry afternoon after a laborious hunt,

young Thinnanar and his *aides de-camp*, fatigued and hungry and laden with the spoils of their hunt, sought the placid stream to quench their thirst. While at his ablutions, the sight of the towering hill arrested Thinnanar's attention. A chance remark thrown by one of his attendants that 'the deity of matted locks' (meaning Lord Shiva) dwelt on the hill-top set a keener edge on his curiosity and forgetting all about his food and rest he forthwith started to see the deity.

At every step of his ascent to the hill-top he felt as though the heavy burden of ages was being gradually unloaded from his shoulders leaving him lighter and freer than ever. This feeling, queer and ununderstandable though it must have been to the hunter, was nevertheless a new experience, uplifting and invigorating. He felt as being enveloped by a dreamy oblivion into which all thought of home and the hunt, of hunger and exhaustion receded and disappeared.

He reached the summit and was in the presence of the deity that stole his heart. The storm of emotion that was gathering strength broke out and in throbbing devotion Thinnanar rushed forward and embraced the deity. It was a touching scene of the meeting of two lovers long separated. When the

first gush of devotion had abated Thinnanar became busy with the service of his beloved deity. He soon found that food has to be offered to the Lord. His thoughts flew back to the spoils of the hunt. Yes, he would feed his Lord with some dainty pieces of roasted boar-flesh. Beckoning to his comrades he ran down the hill to the river bank.

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The shades of evening were falling fast and through the dusky woodland was seen the tall figure of Thinnanar running up the hill in hot haste. In his hair-tuft were a few freshly plucked flowers, in his hand a packet of streaming flesh and within his mouth a gulp of river water. When he reached the presence of his God, a beatific joy lit up his tired countenance. Tears of ecstasy mingled with beads of sweat moistened his brazen chest. As both his hands were engaged, he removed the withered flowers from the deity with his slippered foot and, as if pouring out the contents of his soul, emptied over the image the water which he had carried for that purpose in his mouth. This done, he decorated Him with the flowers which he had carried in his tuft, placed the offering of meat before Him and began to implore Him as would a child his playmate, to accept it.

It was already dark when his novel *pūja* ended and so Thin-

nanar soon became the body-guard of his beloved, bow in hand ready for action against any wild beast that may endanger the safety of his deity. Hungry and fatigued though he was, he considered the safety of his Lord more important than his own physical needs and so all through the night he stood at his lone post of duty.

The first streaks of dawn were flushing the eastern sky when our hero parted reluctantly from the image's side and disappeared down the hill. Presently Shivakosariyar, as was his custom for years, came up with his ritualistic paraphernalia for his daily worship. He was shocked to find the sacred place polluted with pieces of flesh! He cursed the mischief-maker and rebuked the Deity for such leniency. However, he cleared the place, performed his worship and went his way home. Towards evening, after a long and weary hunt, Thinnanar returned panting up the hill equipped as previously with his own unique materials of worship: flowers in the hair-tuft, water in his mouth and hot, roasted flesh in his hand. Though the marks of hunger, sleeplessness and exhaustion were writ large on his face, a lustre played upon it, the lustre of the light that was lit within by his beloved deity. The events of the previous evening were re-enacted: the

lengthy but simple *puja* when the heart poured out its devotion; the long vigil throughout the night and the painful scene of separation the next morning.

Five long days and nights passed in this wise, the fortunate hill-top witnessing a dual scene daily: Shivakosariyar venting in the mornings his indignant curses on the blasphemous mischief-maker and expostulatory admonitions on the deity, and in the evenings the mad talk of God-intoxication, the ecstatic tears and the self-abnegating service of Thinnanar. Perhaps with food perhaps without, heedless of physical needs, engaged throughout in the service of his Lord, the youthful hunter spent these five memorable days of his stormy spiritual evolution. Each new day saw him engrossed more and more in his divine rapture; each new day saw the rare spiritual blossom in him about to burst until on the sixth day the storm reached its climax and threw open to him the flood-gates of the light divine.

The scene of this divine *denouement* is graphically described by his biographer Sekkilar: In pursuance of a divine behest Shivakosariyar had received in dream, he after his customary worship hid himself behind some bushes and awaited the arrival of 'this unique *bhakta* who offered flesh to the Lord'. After the lapse of several hours

Thinnanar beaming with divine effulgence appeared on the scene. The brahmin watched in suspense. Thinnanar was approaching the image with steps faltering through absorption in the thought of his beloved. All of a sudden his eyes were caught by a shocking sight. He paused; his eager feet refused to move and his bow slipped from his hands. Alas! who had thus wounded the Lord in his absence? From one of the eyes of the image blood was flowing out profusely! A trice he watched in mute consternation; the melting heart of devotion then steeled suddenly; he seized the fallen bow and ran wildly about. Finding neither man nor beast in the vicinity who could have been guilty of the crime, he returned disappointed. A tempest was raging within him; by what means could he save his Lord? He turned to the image; Was this all a dream? No, the flow of blood was as profuse as ever. The efficacy he had heard of certain herbs and leaves in such cases, crossed his mind. He tried the remedy but to his chagrin, with no effect. A feeling of utter helplessness overwhelmed him and the thought that he would never be able to save his beloved from His plight gnawed into his vitals. At that psychological moment, a saving idea flashed through his mind like a lightning. Had not the hunter's tradition taught him that 'blood must be met with blood'.

The very next moment an

arrow was seen piercing into Thinnanar's eye—he had applied the dread theory into practice! He took out the eye from its socket, already a pool of blood, and placed it in the Lord's bleeding socket. Shivakosariyar behind the bush trembled in horror. The *bhakta*'s face was relit with the lustre of joy when he saw that the remedy has proved effective and that the Lord's eye has ceased to bleed. He almost danced in ecstacy. Swift moments flitted by; and lo! and behold! the other eye of the image too had begun to bleed! Thinnanar however was not embarrassed in the least; for he had already known the remedy. With perfect equipoise, unmindful of the blood that was flowing from his one eye, he drew out an arrow from the quiver to take out the other. . .

'Stay Kannappa!' came a sweet voice in anxious tremour. 'Stay Kannappa, choice heir of my love, desist'. He heard the voice; he saw the image take life and speak; and he felt the arrow falling from his hand. That was all; he heard no more, saw no more, felt no more. The whole scene vanished. A sea of light engulfed him and in the innermost recesses of his being he saw and felt what he had never seen nor felt before—the vision Beatific of the One he loved and served, the object of his heart's desire, his All in All. And in that sea of light Thinnanar the hunter faded into Kannappar, the saint.

## BHIKSHU AKHANDANAND OF GUJARAT

By Chhotalal M. Kamdar, B.A.,

'As long as the Gujarati language exists, the name of Akhandanand will remain immortal', wrote the late Motibhai Amin in an issue of *Charottar*. There will hardly be a village in Gujarat or Kathiawar where books published by Bhikshu Akhandanand have not reached. But today unfortunately Gujarat and its literature are poorer by his death. We are too near the event to realise the magnitude of the loss.

In Samvat<sup>1</sup> 1930 a son was born to Jagjivan Thakkar a religious and respectable merchant of Borsad and the child was named Lallubhai. The mother Haribai was religious-minded and of a very kindly disposition and the son inherited many of the virtues of the mother. When the time came, young Lallubhai was sent to school. But Nature more than the class room attracted him. And when in Samvat 1943, his father passed away he had to give up his education and look after the business of his father. Nevertheless Lallubhai had that thirst for knowledge and so his desire for reading persisted.

At the early age of seven or eight Lallubhai was married.

But his temperament and yearnings for a higher life soon showed that he was not for family life. Some time after the birth of a son, Lallubhai left his hearth and home. In Samvat 1960, on the auspicious Shivaratri day he got himself initiated into the life of *sannyas* in the presence of Shivananda Maharaj and adopted the name of Akhandanand. He then started for Himalayas for doing *tapas*. There he got the experience of *samadhi*. He came in close contact with Swami Ramatirtha and Pandit Malavyaji. He took notes of Swami Ramatirtha's speeches. Referring to the Swamiji, Swami Ramatirtha is said to have remarked once, 'He is my disciple, companion and everything'.

From the Himalayas Akhandanand came down to Bombay. There he went in for a book of Bhajans and was struck by the exorbitant price of the book. The idea then entered his mind that religious songs, valuable utterances of saints and other forms of religious literature should not be prohibitive in cost and that they must be made available to all and sundry at the cheapest rates possible. And this idea plunged him in action.

1. In the Gujarati Calendar year is reckoned as Samvat. The present Samvat is 1998.

The Swamiji had immense faith in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavata*. In Samvat 1963 he offered 4000 copies of the same at a low price of six annas. In less than a week all copies were sold out. This was indeed encouraging response for the swamiji's work and he was soon busy with other publications.

In Samvat 1964 The Swamiji founded the Sastu Sahitya Vardhak Karyalaya (Society for the encouragement of cheap literature). It is as the founder and sustainer of this institution that Bhikshu Akhandanand is more known to the public at large. For thirty long years he gave himself up to the popularization of our religious lore and through this institution brought out cheap and popular editions of our sacred literature. He published in all, three hundred books (the number of copies amounting to 17 lakhs.) This is no record of mean merit.

In the midst of his exacting duties on behalf of the Karyalaya the Swamiji never failed to be regular in his spiritual *sadhana*. Even in later years when his health began to be indifferent he did not slacken his daily worship and other forms of *sadhana*. There was another

side to his personality and that was his soft heart for the poor and the helpless. He could not bear the sight of suffering and even at the age of 60, he would himself go out at midnight to cover with blankets those who slept on pavements and streets in winter. Such souls who combine religious zeal with melting love for God's creation are very rare and they are a source of perpetual glory to our Motherland.

For the last six months the Swamiji's health was failing. He sustained a fracture of his right leg and this made his condition worse. At midnight on the 2nd of January he sent a man to distribute blankets to those sleeping on the foot-paths and at one o'clock in the morning his soul gave up its mortal frame.

The Swamiji was keen that the Sastu Sahitya Vardhak Karyalaya, the institution of his making should continue its work after him. And so the last great act of his was to entrust the institution, the cherished fruit of his life's work to a Board of Trustees composed of friends and well-wishers. It is indeed gratifying to learn that the Karyalaya will carry on the work of the great swami in his absence.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### **Humanitarianism : Eastern and Western**

According to the Hindu view, the world history is a play of the twin forces of good and evil, one claiming preponderance over the other and the good asserting sovereignty in the end. The delineation that we get in the Hindu Myths of this cosmic opera with its *denouement* in the triumph of the good not only serves to infuse faith in goodness and to teach us equanimity, but is effectively symbolical of the march of humanity along the ever-winding path of progress—a cycle of catastrophic disasters alternating with periods of glory — to perfection. Henry R. Zimmer while presenting this ‘Hindu view of world History’ in the current issue of the *Review of Religion* observes, that ‘to reach this perfection is among men a privilege reserved for single, outstanding individuals . . . ; but the world-process as a whole is not meant for a gradual progress towards perfection. ‘It is the peculiar glory of western idealism’ he continues, ‘with Christianity broadening into progressive humanitarianism, to have conceived such a goal and to foster an ardent faith which embarks again and again after each

set-back on its quest for collective perfection’.

We wonder how Mr. Zimmer, a deep student of Indian religion though he is, has missed the doctrine of *sarvamukti*, the promise of collective perfection held out by Hinduism. No doubt Hinduism lays all the emphasis at its command on individual perfection which is *mukti* through self-realization. But to take that as obviating the possibilities of collective perfection would be to lose sight of the core of its teaching which stresses that to see the All in one's own self and to see one's self in all is the beginning and end of self-realisation. When a man comes to this realisation of the fundamental oneness of existence he cannot but issue forth in the service of humanity, in an anxious attempt to lift it to his level so that he can share with it the choicest fruits of his realisation. This is how Hinduism conceives of and paves for individual and collective salvation simultaneously. To one who has achieved this realisation, humanity is his own self, God, and help to humanity is no charity or gift but service at the altar divine. It is not the

complaisant humanitarianism of the West that we have here, but the divine humanitarianism where one sees and serves God in man. As for the matter of that, it is not humanitarianism even but a method of realising God and helping others to realise. It is the peculiar glory of Indian religion to have thus made these two supreme ends of individual and collective salvation possible and intensely practical through one single effort.

We fail to see how in the absence of this spiritual basis western humanitarianism can hope to help mankind for collective perfection and be on its quest for it, as Mr. Zimmer makes out to be. The west has yet to build its foundations for perfection individual or otherwise. All that its humanitarianism does is to dole out charity with overbearing condescension. And where has that Christianity which Mr. Zimmer claims to be broadening into progressive humanitarianism taken Europe? Let the present plight of Europe offer its answer to this question.

#### **Art and Life**

The immortal Milton sang that the sacred duty of the poet was 'to justify the ways of God to men'. According to the Indian conception to be an oracle of God and to interpret Him to huma-

nity and help it return to the life of the Spirit is the privileged and glorious function of the artist. In India where everything is set in a spiritual aureole, it is quite fitting that the path of art should also be lit with light divine and be an illumined approach to the spiritual reality. Consistently enough, the source of all artistic inspiration in India is divine, is the Goddess Sarasvati. With her grace alone one can hope to fulfil the lofty functions of the poet or the artist. To be worthy of her grace and be an instrument in her hands one has to purge oneself of all corrupting impulses and chasten oneself a great deal. Unfortunately this ideal of a pure, chaste life being the *sine qua non* of high artistic excellence is fast losing its appeal on the young artists of our country. There is a tendency today to argue that one has to fall a prey to the insidious temptations of going to the gutter for the sake of gaining first-hand knowledge. This tendency must be nipped before it develops into a canker. '..... It behoves us to make clean and clear our instruments so that in the progress of time we may be moved by the "divine afflatus"', observes Shrimati Sophia Wadia in the current issue of the *Triveni*, in a call to the young artists of our country.

'The three gates of hell' she continues, 'mentioned in the

*Gita* are open not only for the *hoi polloi*, but also for the *literati*. Very often does the writer pass through the gate of lust, of wrath, of greed. And what is worse—he is apt to justify his visits to the nether regions as unavoidable and even necessary experiences for his creative labours..... We go a step further and assert that passing down the gateways of *kama*, *kroddha*, *lobha* is not only unnecessary, but that it is highly injurious to the health of the writer's real creative faculty.' Those who justify their sensual descents as necessary to the health of their artistic genius are evidently led by the nose by their primitive passions. And it is but natural that they should be anxious to cover their sores with flowers, to gloss their base appetites by giving them substance and a high purpose.

Among the factors that have encouraged this fell tendency in our artists, western influence must be counted the first. 'Modern western influence, especially that of psychology has weakened the fibre of literary creators and men of spirit are rare among them. Young Indi-

ans imitating their occidental confreres very often give the go-by to the higher life, thus doing a great disservice to the mission of our Motherland, to help humanity return to the life of the spirit. In ancient India literary geniuses have been known for their priceless devotion to the life of the Spirit. The epic personages of Vyasa, Valmiki and others were great not only as poets but as spiritual men. Apposite indeed is the Indian conception of man as a musical instrument and God as the divine artist playing on it, for the edification of humanity. The potentiality of perfect melody of sound is in the instrument but no skill of the artist can awaken a faultless harmony out of a broken or ill-tuned instrument. Hence the supreme necessity for the artist to tune his life to the Infinite. Both for himself and for his country the young artist of today should, nay must, aspire to become a man of the Spirit. Never through sensuality can he hope to acquire wisdom divine and to unfold the power to pass on the Light.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Maha Yoga : By Who. Published by The New Light Publishing House, Pudukkottai. (Trichy) Price Rs 3. or 6 sh. Pp. 272.

This is one of the best books we have on the teachings of Sri Ramanamaharshi. 'His teachings are treated in this book as the *primary* authority, and the Upanishadic lore as next in value—as amplifying and supplementing it. 'The reader need not accept anything that is set forth here, unless he finds it to be in consonance with the actual teachings of the Sage.' (author's *Foreword*). The subtitle—'The Upanishadic lore in the light of the Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana'—explains the purpose of the book precisely. The book has been translated into French and the present English edition has already undergone one edition. These facts indicate its usefulness and popularity.

It is the special advantage and glory of the Vedantic religion that it is entirely based on Scripture, Reason, and Experience. Our sages have arrived at Truth and tested its validity in the light this triune principle.

The discordant voice of scripture cannot carry conviction without appeal to reason; vagaries of reasonings are too well-known to accept reason as the sole guide; if experience is kept out of the field the other two factors are of no value; and idiosyncracies can be scrutinized and checked only in the light of reason and scriptures. So this vedantic criteria merit acceptance by all rational minds. The scriptures communicate light only through the life of the Saints and Seers. And again experience of the spiritual realities is made possible only by the example of Saints. The book under notice gives a short sketch of the life of a very great sage and strings together the luminous words of instruction that have come from his lips, with proper interpretation and under suitable headings. The foot-notes supply parallel ideas in the Upanishads to stress their genuineness. On the whole it gives the scheme of self-knowledge taught and lived by the Maharshi. Spiritual aspirants can no doubt make a very useful addition to their library by going in for this volume of exposition.

**Continence and Its Creative Power:** By Swami Jagadiswarananda, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Karachi. Price 4 As.

There is a general belief in our country that Rishis are not born in the present age, that they belonged to our luminous past. Logically this cannot be unquestionable; for what is possible for man at one time must be so at all times. However the deep-rooted belief cannot be discarded when we take into consideration the very worldly tendencies of today. We should try to see why Rishis are not born in such large numbers today. The venerable sage Apastamba has given the reason in his *Dharmasutra* I. 5. 1. It is clearly and emphatically stated there that Rishis are not born in later generation because of the failure on the part of men and women to observe the rules of Brahmacharya. With a little thought we can very easily find out that want of this personal virtue has stunted the growth of man mentally, physically and economically. The fact deserves all attention because the future of the society is entirely based upon this great discipline. We require many tracts and pamphlets and a systematic scheme of education to emphasize and inculcate the importance of this sovereign principle, the neglect of which has reduced the potential

god to a grovelling beast.

Swami Jagadiswarananda's booklet on continence, which originally appeared in *The Vedanta Kesari* for July 1941, will serve to dispel the ignorance of many in respect of the laws of purity and self-control in single and married life. Transgressions of these laws make one unfit for the achievements of the great Ends of life. A word of reminder is necessary for all those who appreciate Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya denotes the conduct (*charya*) that will take one to truth or Knowledge (Brahma). It is not merely continence or control of lust. The discipline of Brahmacharya includes all that will help one to discover one's Higher self — mastery of sense powers, purity in thought and action, dedication of physical and mental energies for noble purpose, constant aspiration for the divine perfection, and the like. In common parlance now-a-days the word is graded down to the control of the primary sex impulse alone. The conception of Brahmacharya is narrowly limited by this violence. It is highly necessary that its full significance should be grasped by all, especially by those who are in the first stage of life, to make the life of continence perfectly successful and to realize the lofty values of existence.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home & Vidyalaya, Batticaloa, Ceylon. Report for 1942.

In spite of the emergencies created by the war, the activities of the Mission at Batticaloa continued unhampered.

**The Shivananda Vidyalaya** There were 34 new admissions to the Vidyalaya at the beginning of the year and the number on the rolls was 156. The close and most cordial relationship between the teacher and the taught is characteristic of the Gurukula life. Efforts are being made to provide residential quarters for all members of the staff within the school premises, so that the students may derive the full benefit of their help and guidance. The "Acharya Mandir" the new quarters for the Principal is the first step in this direction.

**The Students' Home** was 40 strong during the year. Of these seven attended the Tamil School and the rest received English education at the Vidyalaya. Good attention is paid to the all-round development of the inmates who receive a training for life. The Government grant is insufficient for the running of the Home and hence it has to fall back on public subscription.

The total income for the year was Rs. 3,967 cts 75 and the expenditure under different heads came to Rs. 4,124, cts 90.

A chemistry Laboratory, two class-rooms for the Vidyalaya and a workshop for the Home seem to be the urgent needs of the institution. The management while thanking their sympathisers for their support, appeal for more help to cope with the increasing demands on its activities and resources.

### The Mayavati Charitable Dispensary. Report for 1941.

The Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati, Himalayas, well-known for its publications of religious literature has been rendering meritorious yet silent service to the poor and helpless inhabitants of the mountains through its charitable hospital. This was first started as a Dispensary in 1903 and since then it has been growing in size and importance. Now it attracts and attends to patients from a distance of fifty or sixty miles.

The Hospital has thirteen beds. But as occasion demands accomodation is made even for thirty. It has an Operation Room with up-to-date equipments and a Clinical Laboratory which is a rare thing in those parts.

The total number of patients treated during the year in the Indoor department was 339 and 13, 353 in the Outdoor department of which 11, 072 were new and 2,281 repeated cases.

The total receipts for the year under review was Rs. 27,991-14-4 and the total expenses came to Rs. 13,117-0-10. The management thanks the sympathisers and promoters of the institution for their uniform help and cooperation.

### Swami Nishkalananda Passes Away.

Swami Nishkalananda passed away, after a short illness, at the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, on the 27th June 1942, at the age of 58. After acquiring some knowledge of medicine he joined the above Ashrama in 1912. He was initiated into Brahmacharya by Srimat Swami Brahmananda and into Sannyasa by Srimat Swami Siva-

nanda. He spent several years at Kankhal, and later took charge of the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary. A few years later still he joined the Mission Dispensary at Bhubaneswar. For the last three years he was living at Kankhal.

The Swami was much liked by all for his amiable nature. His tender care of the patients made him dear to them. He was of a devotional temperament, with an aesthetic bent, and was a great lover of the old Vaishnava poets of Bengal. He lived a genuine Sadhu, retaining consciousness of his Chosen Ideal to the last. In his demise the Ramakrishna Mission has lost a sincere worker. May his soul rest in peace.

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The method of the Divine Manifestation is through calm and harmony, not through a catastrophic upheaval. The latter is the sign of a struggle, generally of conflicting vital forces, but at any rate a struggle on the inferior plane.

You think too much of the adverse forces. That kind of preoccupation causes much unnecessary struggle. Fix your mind on the positive side. Open to the Mother's power, concentrate on her protection, call for light, calm and peace and purity and growth into the divine consciousness and knowledge.

The idea of tests also is not a healthy idea and ought not to be pushed too far. Tests are applied not by the Divine but by the forces of the lower planes—mental, vital, physical—and allowed by the Divine because that is part of the soul's training and helps it to know itself, its powers and the limitations it has to outgrow.

—Sri Aurobindo.

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AN OLD MESSAGE DAWNS ANEW

Man is his own Star, and the soul that can  
Render an honest and a perfect man,  
Commands all light, all influence, all fate.  
Nothing to him falls early or too late.  
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,  
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

— Fletcher.

'Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me', says the Lord in the Gita—*arta*, the distressed or the ailing, *jijnasu*, the seeker of Knowledge, *artharathi*, the one after material ends and *jnani*, the man of knowledge.' There is involved in the above statement an apparent paradox which may suggest itself to some at second reading. Do the *arta*, the *jijnasu* and the *artharathi* really worship the Lord as an end in itself, or for the sake of things other than the Lord? The *arta*, the man in distress, seeks relief from his agony rather than the Lord, though of course the Lord's help is sought for this purpose. To him God is more a means than an end. And this is true of the other two of the group, namely, the *jijnasu*, who seeks Knowledge and the *artharathi* who seeks material ends. They too are not true worshippers of God. We naturally question their claim to be the *bhaktas* of the Lord. Our doubts

are made deeper when Sri Krishna classes them along with the *jnani*, the man of Knowledge. By way of clearing this doubt and elucidating his point further, Bhagavan says: 'Noble, indeed, are all these. Of them the *jnani* (the man of realisation) is excessively dear to me, for he is ever steadfast, *nityayukta*, and devoted to me. He is My own Self.'

The tone of tolerance is unmistakably clear in the above words of the Lord. His love embraces even those who do not ask for his love, but for the prizes of the world. He accepts all stages of spiritual evolution recognising their degrees of reality. He has said elsewhere in effect that all paths in which we may wander are His. So those who are on the path also merit His grace. But louder than all these, sounds His unqualified preference for the *jnani*, whom He has proclaimed as the dearest and nearest, he being ever steadfast in mind and resorting to Him alone as his unsurpassed goal.

In the assurance of His grace to those on the preparatory stages of spiritual development and in the frank partiality and preference for

the *jnani*, the Godhead in the Gita has condensed the essentials of religion and philosophy.

It is to the task of opening to man the passage from his present imperfection to perfection that all religions address themselves. This task has been accomplished admirably by the above teaching. Man is in eternal want; he is either in agony, or distress and ignorance. In the initial stages of his development man naturally believes that God only can make him whole. 'On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven the perfect round' sings the poet. Sri Krishna fulfils this function of making men whole, by gathering all to His bosom and comforting them with the words, 'you are all mine' — meaning thereby that they share His perfection and fulness. The assurance of the Lord's grace is nothing but the affirmation of perfection. The God of religion helps the imperfect man to become perfect by removing the covering that shrouds his perfection. He develops the arc into the circle, restores man's forgotten Divinity. He is so bountiful that in due course He transfers all His treasures of perfection to the devotee, after which He makes His exit. Man then is no more dependent on God; for he has merged himself in the Divine Essence. He is now self-sufficient, self-abundant, *atmatushta*, established in himself. All that for which he was looking up to God is discovered within himself and he is crowned as the sole sovereign--as *swarat*. God then appears as the Absolute of philosophy.

This marks the transition from religion to philosophy. The resolution of God into the Absolute of philosophy is of deep significance to life. The Advaita Vedanta does

not admit of two Absolutes, nor two selves. It makes Man the centre of the universe, the centre of a circle without a circumference. The Advaita Vedanta affirms that the Self of man is the Absolute, *ayamatma brahma*. Man realises his immensity, realises that he is the *all*. He then rises to the full stature of his being, and attains divine glory. He henceforward fills all existence himself. The eternal fountain of bliss and perfection in him is discovered and opened, with the *mantra* Thou art That. 'You are perfection itself already; You now shine by yourself. Give up depending on an extraneous source and be *yourself*'—This is the great comforting gospel that the Vedanta gives through the *mahavakya*. And when the truth of this gospel is realised and the hidden perfection unravelled, we affirm our *yoga* with the Divine. The Divine claims us back as His own Self, as we read in the Gita. The Gita avails of this opportunity to encourage a spontaneous transition from the *bhakta*'s religious devotion to the Divine, to the wisdom born of the realisation of the Self, of Divine consciousness. It is consistent with this realisation that Indian spirituality joins philosophy and religion in a team, philosophy always functioning to serve religion.

We now come to the practical side of this realisation, the way of life that naturally follow the gaining of Divine consciousness. The Divine consciousness is nothing but the immediate realization of the Supreme all-comprehensive One. Our inner eye is then opened, and the whole world declares the presence of the one Supreme and nothing else. The universe becomes alive with Spirit and aglow with Divine light. When this consummation is reached — it is very important

to remember—the world is not annihilated, but appears in its true value. To one who has realised the Divine, in and through the dead material universe the Divine Reality shines forth.

From this realisation we deduce a truth for our empirical life. We derive a message of life-affirmation. In so far as the world is reaffirmed and incorporated with Divinity, we are shown the method to make our life in the world Divine. Sri Krishna, after revealing his universal form to Arjuna, emphasises this method of affirmation through devotion and knowledge : ‘Neither by austerity, nor by sacrifice can I be seen. But by undistracted devotion only can I be known and seen in reality.’

The gospel of *bhakti* is a gospel of affirmation. If affirmation is urged by the Lord as an effective method for the attainment of the Divine, it must be equally efficient in life directed to that end. We can thus see the usefulness of the method of affirmation in every-day life. When it is understood that the world in reality is only a Divine apparition, there is no need to shun it and thus make our spiritual struggle unnecessarily difficult. By recognizing the Divine in every act and every creature we soon learn that there is nothing to negate. Then we realize that our life is lit with the light of the Supreme Divine Being. By this method of affirmation life on the empirical plane becomes the more rich. Harmony is established with the environment, and calmness and peace are attained even in our allotted daily life. The smile of God is seen even on the face of suffering ; we no more need believe that man has to rise to his perfection through suffering, and that sorrow is the birthplace of the life of the Spirit.

For some time past there has been a tendency among some thinkers in this country to over-simplify the highest truths. The ultimate reality of the Absolute and the relative unreality of the world has been interpreted to inculcate negation of the world, irrespective of mental development or stages of inner evolution, and to justify a life of inaction and fatality. Prophets and religious teachers who came to us from time to time pointed out to us the fatal error of this way of thought and life. Swami Vivekananda was one of those illustrious band. He made life-long efforts to inculcate the Gita idea that all activity can be made Divine worship and that God should be realized here and now by affirming and recognising the immanent Divinity in the lowest and the highest. He taught with the clearest accent that the way to self-realisation lies through the Knowledge that the Self is All, and not by negating the world of experience. Life on the earth is enriched and hightened in value by this method. Loud and clear rings his call to the country :

Arise, Awake ! Be you my helpers in this work. Go over from village to village and tell each and all that infinite power resides within them, that they are sharers of immortal bliss. Thus rouse up the Rajas within them — make them fit for the struggle for existence, and then speak to them about salvation. For want of food and clothing and plunged in anxiety for it, the country has come to ruin — what are you doing to remedy this ? Throw aside your scriptures in the Ganges and teach the people first the means of procuring their food and clothing and then you will find time to read to them the scriptures. If their material wants are not removed by the rousing of intense activity, none will listen to words of spirituality. Therefore I say, first rouse the inherent power of the Atman within you, then rousing the faith of the general people in the power as much as you can,

teach them first of all to make provision for food, and then teach them religion.

To this end the Swami sought the deepening of the spiritual life of the Nation, for which he said, the gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces is necessary. The Swami and those worthy sons of the soil who came after him, did much to gather up the nation's scattered spiritual forces and cultivate the national life in its various aspects. Thanks to these efforts, India has been looking up and veering round to fulfil herself. These great men have spared no pains to resuscitate the national life by enlivening the national consciousness and by working for political, economic, and social liberation of the Land. And these have been worked up in complete concord with the spiritual traditions of the land. The success of these endeavours has opened the eyes of the world and once again its attention has been focussed on India.

Every day, nay every minute the same old message is being delivered to us by our inner being, the message of our perfection urging us

to manifest itself. But we heed it not. The cause of the dreary frustration through which we are presently passing is not far to seek. It lies in our criminal indifference to this message. We forget that the choicest flower that we can offer at the feet of the Supreme Being is obedience to this message through a life of action and divine dedication consistent with it. We are paying heavily for our neglect of this message and disregard of our great traditions.

We conclude in the stirring words of Swami Vivekananda. 'Now it won't do to merely quote the authority of our ancient books. The tidal wave of Western civilization is now rushing over the length and breadth of the country. It won't do now simply to sit in meditation on mountain tops without realising in the least its usefulness. Now is wanted — as said in the Gita by the Lord — intense Karma-Yoga, with unbounded courage and indomitable strength in the heart. Then only will the people of the country be roused, otherwise they will continue to be as much in the dark as before.'

Now my one desire is to rouse the country—the sleeping Leviathan that has lost all faith in his power and makes no response. If I can wake it up to a sense of the Eternal Religion, then I shall know that Sri Ramakrishna's advent and our birth are fruitful. That is the one desire of my heart; Mukti and all else appear of no consequence to me.

— *Swami Vivekananda.*

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

[Only a giant can comprehend a giant's strength ; a dwarf can at best have only a very vague and imperfect idea of giantly might. This is true about spiritual giants also—i.e. in the case of the God-men whose mission in life is to work, not for individual salvation, but for national, nay, universal regeneration. Their genius is so uncommon, so extraordinary and so varied in its appeal that ordinary men who lack the unique vision and keenness of perception necessary to understand and evaluate soul-force are either totally blind to their greatness or view that greatness from this or that angle only. Only the participants and helpers in the Divine *lila* of a saviour can fathom His depths and understand him through and through.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, both while alive as also after his passing, has been a magnet drawing human souls unto him. One is struck when one reads in his biography about the number and the kinds of people who resorted to him in his lifetime for solace and light, and how not one went away with hunger unappeased or thirst unquenched. The power to charm minds and hearts, which Sri Ramakrishna possessed in infinite measure has not disappeared with his physical disappearance. His appeal is still compelling, still irresistible. An unending procession of thirsty souls is still on their pilgrimage to the Dakshineswar of Sri Ramakrishna's personality and message, eager to have a drink divine from the Ganges of his love and wisdom.

Sri Ramakrishna has received homage both from contemporary and posterior humanity. But the one man who comprehended him in entirety, by rising to his own heights of effulgence, was Swami Vivekananda, his foremost disciple, co-partner and heir. Of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, it must be said that the one would have been, so to say, incomplete without the other. Vivekananda was rooted in Ramakrishna, and the Paramahamsa blossomed out in the Swami. How splendidly the mission of Ramakrishna was carried out by Vivekananda is now a matter of history.

Swami Vivekananda however has not given to the world a comprehensively written biography of his Master, nor a

logically worked out thesis of his teachings. But there is no cause for disappointment however. Although Vivekananda has not given us a long biography of his Master in so many words, he has given it through his deeds, in his glorious life which is without parallel. For what was Vivekananda's life but one continuous attempt to understand and interpret his Master to the world. And this he did not by passive listening and ready acceptance, like ordinary disciples, but by doubting, questioning, arguing, testing and even fighting, with the result that he knew the Master better than any one else, both analytically and synthetically. We find however in the published writings both of the Swami, and about him, numerous references to the Paramahamsa and his life and work. These lie scattered in epistles, writings, lectures (the most important of which is *My Master* delivered in New York), interviews, conversations and talks, and are not available in a single and continuous narrative. In order to provide a picture of Sri Ramakrishna in the Swami's own words it is proposed to bring together all the Swami's utterances on Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna is a great new continent, and those who desire to traverse its wide expanses and study its flora and fauna will find it helpful to take as their guide one who knows every inch of that continent.]

' I am a pupil of a great Indian sage, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He was not what one might call a very learned man, as some of our sages are, but a very holy one, deeply imbued with the spirit of Vedanta philosophy. When I say philosophy, I hardly know whether I ought not to say religion, for it is really both. You must read Professor Max Muller's account of my Master in a recent number (the date of the utterance is 1896) of the *Nineteenth Century*. Ramakrishna was born in the Hooghly district in 1836, and died in 1886. He produced a deep effect on the life of Keshub Chunder Sen and others.

By discipline of the body and subduing of the mind he obtained a wonderful insight into the spiritual world. His face was distinguished by a childlike tenderness, profound humility, and remarkable sweetness of expression. No one could look upon it unmoved.

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According to one's own capacity one has understood Sri Ramakrishna and so is discussing about him. It is not bad either to do so. But if any of his devotees has concluded that what he has understood of him is the only truth, then he is an object of pity. Some are saying that Sri Ramakrishna was a Tantrika and Kaula, some that he was Sri Chaitanya born on earth to preach 'Naradiya Bhakti', some again that it is opposed to faith in him as an Avatar to practise Sadhana, while some are opining that it is not agreeable to his teachings to take to Sannyasa. You will hear such words from the householder devotees, but do not listen to such one-sided estimates. What he was, the concentrated embodiment of how many previous Avatars — we could not understand a bit even spending the whole life in religious austerity. Therefore one has to speak about him with caution and restraint. As are one's capacities to that extent has he filled him with ideas. One spray from the full ocean of his spirituality, if realised, will make gods of men. Such a synthesis of universal ideas you will not find in the history of the world again. Understand from this who was born in the person of Sri Ramakrishna.

When he used to instruct his Sannyasin disciples, he would rise from his seat and look about if any householder was coming that way or not. If he found none, then in glowing words he

would depict the glory of renunciation and Tapasya. As a result of the rousing power of that fiery dispassion, we have renounced the world and become averse to worldliness.

In time the whole world must accept the universal and catholic ideas of Sri Ramakrishna and of this, only the beginning has been made. Before this flood everybody will be swept off. He himself is his own parallel. Has he any exemplar?

What shall I say about myself? You see, I must be one of his demons. In his presence even, I would sometimes speak ill of him, hearing which he would laugh.

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That Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was God incarnate, I have not the least doubt of, but then you must let people find out for themselves what he used to teach. ....Without studying Ramakrishna Paramahamsa first, one can never understand the real import of the Vedas, the Vedanta, of the *Bhagavata* and the other Puranas. His life is a searchlight of infinite power thrown upon the whole mass of Indian religious thought. He was the living commentary to the Vedas and to their aim. He had lived in one life the whole cycle of the national religious existence in India.

Whether Bhagavan Sri Krishna was born at all we are not sure; and Avatars like Buddha and Chaitanya are monotonous; Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is the latest and the most perfect — the concentrated embodiment of knowledge, love, renunciation, catholicity and the desire to serve mankind. So where is anyone to compare with him? He must have been born in vain who cannot appreciate him! My supreme good fortune is that I am his servant through life

after life. A single word of his is to me far weightier than the Vedas and the Vedanta. Oh, I am the servant of the servants of his servants. But narrow bigotry militates against his principles, and this makes me cross. Rather let his name be drowned in oblivion, and his teachings bear fruit instead! Why, was he a slave to fame? Certain fishermen and illiterate people called Jesus Christ a God, but the literate people killed him. Buddha was honoured in his lifetime by a number of merchants and cowherds. But Ramakrishna has been

worshipped in his lifetime — towards the end of this nineteenth century by the demons and giants of the university as God incarnate. .... Only a few things have been jotted down in the books about them (Krishna, Buddha, Christ, etc.) "One must be a wonderful house-keeper with whom we have never yet lived," so the Bengali proverb goes. But here is a man in whose company we have been day and night and yet consider him to be a far greater personality than any of them. Can you understand this phenomenon ?'

## A NEW WORLD ORDER A PHILOSOPHER'S PLAN FOR PERPETUAL PEACE

*By A. S. Narayana Pillai, M. A., M. Litt.*

It is a curious thing that though the war is raging with a wild fury and its end is not in sight, people in every country have been talking about the problems of peace and of post-war reconstruction. In a sense, of course, it is the outcome of mankind's inherent capacity to take a long view of things. Even in the midst of death and destruction they must think of the morrow. The demands on their time are heavy and the strain on their nerves is great: there are so many things that claim their attention in the immediate present — and yet they cannot forget the future.

Moreover men cannot rest in doubt. They want to make sure that they are undergoing all these hardships and are fighting for a better, a safer and saner world. After all even the longest war has an end: some day the combatants will lay down arms. Men would then sit amidst the ruins

to plan a better world. Why not do it earlier and be sure of its outlines at least?

And judging from past experience there are many things to be said in favour of such a procedure. Wars leave bitterness behind; and reconstruction done in an atmosphere of hate, vengeance and weariness is neither lasting nor secure. Our men of destiny have shown themselves incapable of rising above these. Worlds made 'safe for democracy' and for many other things have proved to be houses of cards. At the first touch they have tumbled down. Perhaps the statesmen themselves were not to blame for they were attempting the superhuman viz., to be dispassionate when passions would naturally run high. Why not therefore make their work easier? Why not give them when they sit at the treaty-table a well-discussed plan for

reconstruction? The outlines will be there; they would need only filling in with details!

It is possible that our statesmen do not like to be helped in this way. They may resent any attempt by others to do this work which they regard as their prerogative. But they must be made to feel that the common men have greater interest in the world of the future. The shortsightedness of statesmen may cost the common man much suffering. Indeed, it has cost him much already! Who can blame him if, as a result, he shows a lively interest in the world-to-be and desires *even now* to plan that world and to outline 'the shape of things to come'?

#### KANT'S CONTRIBUTION

When the common man happens to be a systematic thinker and unbiased by any party or other affiliations his plan becomes more valuable. When, in addition, he has other advantages, of being, for instance, 'one of the master thinkers of modern times' he deserves our careful study. Such is Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the great German philosopher and one of the greatest that ever lived.

Kant's influence on modern European thought cannot be over-emphasised. His famous *Critiques* marked the beginning of a new epoch in speculative philosophy. His remarkably original contributions to epistemology, ethics and metaphysics are well-known, at least to students of philosophy. But not so well-known is his penetrating philosophical essay on *Perpetual Peace*.

#### EMINENTLY PRACTICAL

This political treatise was written in 1795. Philosopher though he was,

Kant had a firm hold on the realities of life. He was no mere dreamer and in this work he is not sketching any favourite dream of his but in a thoroughly systematic and practical way laying bare the conditions on the fulfilment of which the achieving of perpetual peace depends. As dealing with the problem of putting an end to wars between nations, the essay is of enduring value and of particular interest at the present time.

'Any one,' says Prof. Latta,<sup>1</sup> 'who is acquainted with the general character of the mind of Kant will expect to find in him sound commonsense, clear recognition of the essential facts of the case and a remarkable power for analytically exhibiting the conditions on which the facts necessarily depend. These characteristics are manifest in the essay on *Perpetual Peace*.

He continues, 'Kant is not pessimistic enough to believe that a perpetual peace is an unrealisable dream or a consummation devoutly to be feared, nor is he optimistic enough to fancy that it is an ideal which could easily be realised if men would but turn their hearts to one another. For Kant perpetual peace is an ideal, not merely as a speculative utopian idea, with which in fancy we may play, but as a moral principle which ought to be, and therefore can be realised. Yet he makes it perfectly clear that we cannot hope to approach the realisation of it unless we honestly face political facts and get a firm grasp of the indispensable conditions of a lasting peace. To strive after the ideal in contempt or in ignorance of these conditions is a labour that must inevitably be either fruitless or destructive of its own ends'.

<sup>1</sup> Preface. *Perpetual Peace*—Tr. M. Campbell Smith. 3rd Impression 1917.

## WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS ?

The conditions of a perpetual peace are of two kinds : negative and positive. The negative conditions are the evils that must be removed ; the positive conditions are those which will make the realisation of a perpetual peace possible. These negative and positive conditions constitute the subject-matter of the *Treatise on Perpetual Peace*. Kant calls them Preliminary and Definitive Articles respectively, the whole essay being carefully thrown into the form of a treaty.

Let us see what these Articles are. Brief extracts from the critical notes that Kant has added to each Article will serve to make his meaning clear.

### PRELIMINARY ARTICLES

**1. NO TREATY OF PEACE SHALL BE REGARDED AS VALID, IF MADE WITH THE SECRET RESERVATION OF MATERIAL FOR A FUTURE WAR.**

For then it would be mere truce, a mere suspension of hostilities, not peace. There should be no mental reservation of old claims to be thought out at a future time, which are, none of them, mentioned at this stage, because both parties are too much exhausted to continue the war, while the evil intention remains of using the first favourable opportunity for further hostilities.

**2. NO STATE HAVING AN INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE — WHETHER IT BE GREAT OR SMALL — SHALL BE ACQUIRED BY ANOTHER THROUGH INHERITANCE, EXCHANGE, PURCHASE OR DONATION.**

For a state is not a property. It is a society of human beings over whom no one but itself has the right to rule and to dispose. Moreover the hiring out of troops of one state to another to fight against an enemy

not at war with their native country is to be reckoned in this connection, for the subjects are in this way used and abused at will as personal property.

### 3. STANDING ARMIES SHALL BE ABOLISHED IN COURSE OF TIME.

For they are always threatening other states with war by appearing to be in constant readiness to fight. They incite the various states to out-rival one another in the number of their soldiers and to this number no limit can be set. And owing to the sums devoted to this purpose, peace at last becomes even more oppressive than a short war so that wars of aggression are waged to get rid of this burden. Standing armies are the cause of these.

The matter is different in the case of voluntary periodical military exercise on the part of citizens of the state in order to secure themselves and their country against attack from without.

### 4. NO NATIONAL DEBT SHALL BE CONTRACTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE STATE.

A national debt makes the waging of war easy. And the final inevitable bankruptcy of the state in question must involve in the loss of many who are innocent.

### 5. NO STATE SHALL VIOLENTLY INTERFERE WITH THE CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF ANOTHER.

There can be no justification, whatsoever, for such interference. The autonomy of states should not be made insecure.

### 6. NO STATE AT WAR WITH ANOTHER SHALL COUNTENANCE SUCH MODES OF HOSTILITY AS WOULD MAKE MUTUAL CONFIDENCE IMPOSSIBLE IN A SUBSEQUENT STATE OF PEACE : SUCH ARE THE EMPLOYMENT OF ASSASSINS

**OR OF POISONERS, BREACHES OF CAPITULATION, THE INSTIGATING AND MAKING USE OF TREACHERY IN THE HOSTILE STATE.**

For some kind of confidence in the disposition of the enemy must exist even in the midst of war, as otherwise peace could not be concluded, and the hostilities would pass into a war of extermination. The methods just mentioned lead to this result. Further these vices when once encouraged cannot in the nature of things, be stamped out and would be carried over into the state of peace, where their presence would be utterly destructive to the purpose of that state.

**DEFINITIVE ARTICLES**

**I. THE CIVIL CONSTITUTION OF EACH STATE SHALL BE REPUBLICAN.**

For it would then be founded on the principles of (1) the freedom of the members of society as human beings, (2) the dependence of all, as subjects, on a common legislation and (3) the equality of the members as citizens.

Further, under this constitution, the consent of the subjects is required to determine whether there shall be war or not. They would naturally weigh the matter well before bringing down the miseries of war upon their country.

Republicanism is not democracy: in fact it has nothing to do with the form of Government.

**II. THE LAW OF NATIONS SHALL BE FOUNDED ON A FEDERATION OF FREE STATES.**

This is the central idea of the treatise. A thorough-going indubitable system of international law is in practice possible only on the basis of the society of nations. Kant is not trying to make one out of many

nations: the states are not to be fused into one.

**III. THE RIGHTS OF MEN, AS CITIZENS OF THE WORLD, SHALL BE LIMITED TO THE CONDITIONS OF UNIVERSAL HOSPITALITY.**

That is, a stranger entering foreign territory should be treated by its owner without hostility. It is necessary for the public rights of mankind in general and thus for the realisation of perpetual peace.

**PROGRESS OF THE IDEA**

In the hundred and odd years since Kant's death, much that he proposed has come to pass, although sometimes by paths different from those he anticipated. Let us see what progress of this idea there has been in recent years.

The first requirement (Article, I) is recognised in *theory* at least by modern international law. In *practice* it has not been fulfilled. A treaty of this kind is of necessity more or less forced by the victor on the vanquished. The formal ratification of the Treaty of the Versailles, for instance, did not prevent Germany from looking for the day when she might be revenged on the other powers.

Article 2 refers to practices that have disappeared with the gradual disappearance of dynastic wars. Article 6 is still in theory the basis of our modern law of war. Both the articles are embodied in international law.

Article 3 refers to standing armies. Kant certainly would not think that our present system of progressive armaments is a step in the direction of perpetual peace!

Article 4 is not likely to be fulfilled in the near future. Everywhere national debts are mounting.

Article 5 is a recognised principle of international law. In theory at least intervention is held justifiable only where the duty of self-preservation is clear.

### THE FIRST STEP

These recognitions in theory may not have carried us far, but they are the first step. Wars have not ceased, the war drums throb and the battle-flags are still unfurled: but mankind has learnt one thing — to look upon

war not as the rule but 'as an overwhelming and terrible exception, an interruption to the peaceful prosperous course of things, inflicting unlimited suffering and temporary or lasting loss'. This is a gain in itself and gives hope for the future.

Perpetual peace is still an ideal. Kant would assure us that it is realisable and has indicated the lines along which we must work for its realisation.

## THE BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF THE ABSOLUTE

*By Dr. S. K. Maitra, M. A., Ph. D.,  
Benares Hindu University.*

### II

The nature of Tathata being thus understood, the question arises: How does the world of names and forms originate? To answer this question Asvaghosa takes recourse to the conception of Alayavijnana or All-Conserving Soul, which is the principle that is at the root of the world of appearances. What, however, is this Alayavijnana and how is it related to Tathata? Asvaghosa's answer is as follows: 'In the one soul we may distinguish two aspects. The one is the soul as suchness, the other is the soul as birth-and-death. Each in itself constitutes all things, and both are so closely interrelated that one cannot be separated from the other.' He then goes on saying, 'The soul as birth-and-death (*samsara*) comes forth (as the law of causation) from the Tathagata's womb (Tathagatagarbha). But the immortal (suchness) and the mortal (i. e., birth-and-death) coincide with each other. Though they are not identical, they are not a duality. Thus when the absolute soul assumes a relative aspect by its self-affirmation

it is called the All-Conserving Mind (Alayavijnana) (*Ibid*, pp. 60-61).

There is an apparent inconsistency in these two passages, for the soul as birth-and-death (Alayavijnana) is in the first paragraph called an aspect of Tathata, while in the second it is described as a creation of the latter. But the contradiction is only apparent, for the second passage makes it quite clear that the creator and the created are here looked upon as identical. The latter, in fact, is called the self-affirmation of the former thus reminding one of the Hegelian conception of the Absolute Idea manifesting itself through the world of history and nature through its self-differentiation.

The Alayavijnana is the principle of evolution, the principle of the genesis of the world of experience with its innumerable variety and complexity. It should be observed, however, that the Alayavijnana by itself is not capable of generating the complex world of experience. It is only when it is stirred (or, as it is

frequently called by Asvaghosa, *perfumed*) by Ignorance that the multiple world of our experience with its sin and suffering arises. There is thus no primordial evil, and consequently the path to Nirvana is not closed. The stirring up of the world-process by the action of Ignorance upon the Alayavijnana is compared in the Lankavatara Sutra to the stirring up of waves on the surface of the sea by the wind in the following beautiful lines :

तरसा ह्युदधेयद्वस्पवनप्रत्ययोदिताः  
वृत्यमानाः प्रवर्तन्ते व्युच्छेदश्च न विष्टते ।  
आलौपीषस्तथा नित्यं विषयपवनेरितः  
चित्रैस्तरंगविज्ञानैर्नृत्यमानः प्रवर्तते ॥

(Bunjii Nanjio's Edition,  
1923, pp. 271-272)

We thus see that the Alayavijnana performs a function somewhat similar to that of Prakrti in the Samkhya philosophy, but it differs from the latter in two important respects. Firstly, it is not a noumenal principle as Prakrti is, but is phenomenal. Secondly, it is conscious and not unconscious, like the Prakrti of the Samkhya. In fact, from the point of view of Asvaghosa, the whole process of evolution is nothing but an evolution of consciousness, there being no place for any unconscious evolution in his philosophy.

Another main idea of Asvaghosa is that of Dharmakaya. The word means the body or system of being<sup>1</sup>, and hence the ultimate reality which underlies all phenomena. It is the immanent principle working in all individuals. Indeed, individuals only acquire their meaning so far as they are regarded as manifestations of the Dharmakaya. The Dharmakaya, in fact, is the principle of suchness

viewed in its immanent aspect. Suzuki (*vide Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*, p. 46) comparing the Dharmakaya with the God of Christianity as well as with the Brahman of the Vedanta, says that it differs from both. 'It is different from the former in that it does not stand transcendentally above the universe, which, according to the Christian view, was created by God, but which, according to Mahayanism, is a manifestation of the Dharmakaya itself. It is also different from Brahman in that it is not absolutely impersonal, nor is it a mere being. The Dharmakaya, in fact, is capable of willing and reflecting, or to use Buddhist phraseology, it is *Karuna* (Love) and *Bodhi* (Intelligence) and not the mere state of being.'

Vijnanavada or the Yogacara philosophy adheres in essential features to the ideas of Suchness, Alayavijnana and Dharmakaya promulgated by Asvaghosa. It is true that the Absolutist tendency of *Sraddhotpadasastra* is not so strongly marked in the other works of the Vijnanavadins, but it would be wrong to attach undue importance, as has been done by Keith, to the statement made in the Lankavatara Sutra (*vide pp. 78-79 of Bunji Nanjio's 1923 edition*) and say that an Absolutist interpretation should not be given to Vijnanavada. On the contrary, the very fact that the Lankavatara Sutra has thought it fit to give an express denial of the connection between the doctrine of the Tathagatagarbha and that of the Vedanta shows very clearly that it was commonly believed at the time when this Sutra was composed that there was such a connection. The words in which the

<sup>1</sup>Suzuki explains here very clearly that the view which is held by many European scholars, viz., that Dharmakaya means the body of the law, is extremely mistaken.

whole question is introduced in the Lankavatara Sutra (अथ खलु महापति वैचिसत्त्वो भगवन्तभेदद्वोचत्.....कुर्वन्ति) Bunjiu Nanjio's 1923 edition, pp. 77-78) show that there was sufficient cause for thinking that there was considerable similarity between the two doctrines. The explanation given as to why the doctrine of the Tathagatagarbha is introduced, viz. that it is done for the sake of removing the horror which the uninitiated feel for *nairatmyavada* (बालानां नैरात्म्यसंप्राप्तसप्तविवर्जितार्थम्) is not likely to convince anybody.

We have so far examined only the Yogacara conception of the Absolute, but what we have said applies also with certain modifications to the Madhyamika view. The main change which we notice when we pass to the Madhyamika view is that it does away with the Alayavijnana. But the other parts of the Yogacara philosophy, namely, the principle of Suchness, the conception of the Tathagatagarbha and of the Dharmakaya are retained, although their meaning undergoes a change, on account of the change in the conception of reality.

The new conception which the Madhyamika introduces is that the real is that which possesses self-existence (*svabhava*), which is not produced by causes (*akrtaka*), which is not dependent upon anything else (*paratra nirapeksa*). In this sense all the objects perceived by our senses or imagined and thought by the mind must be declared to be non-real, for they are all governed by the law of causality (*pratitya-samutpada*). Being so governed, they are all interdependent, and hence unreal. But there is no question here of any void or absolute nothingness. What is assert-

ed is merely that all objects perceived or thought or imagined are devoid of any independent reality, and that, consequently, they can only have relative reality. Indeed, as Stcherbatsky has been at great pains to prove, (Vide Chapter XIV of his book *The Buddhist Conception of Nirvana*) the sunyavada of the Madhyamika does not mean any doctrine of void or nothingness but simply a doctrine of relativity. His doctrine of relativity, indeed, follows from his interpretation of the principle of *pratitya-samutpada* which, as given by Candrakirti, is as follows: *hetupratyayapekso bhavanamutpadah pratityasamutpadarthah*. From this it follows that all things exist as relative to one another, and that consequently, there no independent existence (*svabhava*) for anything.

The relativity of the Madhyamikas is, however, a cloak for a deeper kind of Absolutism than that which is found in the earlier, that is Hinayana Buddhism. Its object is to dethrone logic or reason, because it is condemned to eternal relativity, and to enthron intuition as the sole means of knowing the Absolute. The Madhyamika is more sweeping in his condemnation of pluralism than the Vijnanavadin, and makes short work of the Hinayanist ultimate elements of sense-data. An absolute monism thus results with a thorough-going relativism in the phenomenal domain. The destructive criticism of the categories of phenomenal existence which we find in Nagarjuna, the founder of the Madhyamika school, somewhat resembles the criticism of the categories of phenomenal existence, such as Cause, Substance, etc., which we find in Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* or Taylor's *Elements of Metaphysics*. But there is this important

difference between Bradley and Taylor on the one hand and Nagarjuna on the other, that unlike the former, Nagarjuna does not recognize grades of reality in phenomenal existence, the whole of it being condemned as relative.

The central conception of Madhyamika philosophy is, however, not relativity but Absolutism. The relativity of phenomenal existence is in fact only expounded in order to pave the way for a thorough-going Absolutism. As Stcherbatsky says (*The Buddhist Conception of Nirvana*, p. 47) 'He (Nagarjuna) extols the principle of Relativity and destroys through it every plurality, in order to clear up the ground and establish on it the unique, undefinable (*anirvacniya*) Essence of Being, the One-with-out-a-Second.'

There is one more point which we would like to mention in connection with the Madhyamika view of the Absolute. It is the famous saying of Nagarjuna :

संसारस्यच निर्वाणात् किञ्चिन्नास्ति विशेषणम्  
ननिर्वाणस्यच संसारत् किञ्चिदस्ति विशेषणम्  
"The monistic character of his philosophy is nowhere more evident than in this saying. Nirvana or the Absolute is present everywhere. It is not something which stands above the errors, the sins, the weaknesses of the world of phenomenal existence. All these characteristics of the phenomenal world are, when viewed *sub-specie aeternitatis*, nothing but the Absolute or Nirvana. Nagarjuna in this way brings Nirvana into contact with our everyday life. There can be no greater mistake than to suppose that Nirvana is the monopoly of the anchorite. It is, on the contrary, 'the common heritage of mankind. It is this catholicity which is indeed, the most distinguishing

feature of the Madhyamika philosophy and links it closely with the catholicity of the Upanishads. This is also otherwise evident from the general tendency of the teaching of the Mahayana, which enjoins the seeking, not of individual salvation but of salvation for the whole world. Its object, therefore, is to break all barriers that divide man from man, class from class and race from race, and unite the whole of mankind, nay the whole universe, under the guiding conception of Nirvana.

It is rather unfortunate that most European scholars have missed the positive character of the Madhyamika philosophy and have characterized it as nihilism. There are, of course, some exceptions, one of the most notable being Stcherbatsky. Japanese scholars, on the contrary, have emphasized the Absolutist character of this philosophy. Berriedale Keith goes so far as to suggest that the Absolutist interpretation of this philosophy by Suzuki is due to the influence of Tantrika philosophy upon him. The negative element of Nagarjuna's philosophy consists only in this, that he rejects the claim of reason and logic to comprehend the nature of the Absolute. But if a philosophy is to be condemned as nihilistic on this ground, then we shall have to call the philosophy of Sankara also nihilistic, for he also did not believe that reason and logic were competent to give a knowledge of the Absolute. And if we apply this test to our present-day philosophy, which philosopher of the first rank will escape the charge of nihilism? At any rate, Bradley and Bergson will come under it.

We conclude, therefore, that Buddhism, whether in the schools of

the Hinayana or in those of the Mahayana, always held fast, like the Upanishads, to the conception of the Absolute. There is, in fact, a continuity of thought between the Upani-

shads and Buddhist philosophy, and if Sankara is to be called a disguised Buddhist, we may with equal justice call Asvaghosa and Nagarjuna disguised Vedantists.

(Concluded)

## THE BHAGAVADGITA AND THE PRESENT WAR

*By Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, M. A., Ph. D., D. Litt.*

The Lucknow correspondent of *The Leader*, Allahabad, reported the other day that a very conscientious officer found that a certain book called the *Bhagavadgita* which was very widely read by the peasantry of his sub-division was responsible for impeding the war effort. A Dutch Orientalist once applied at the office of the library in the British Museum for an entrance card. He was asked which subject he wished to go in for. The Orientalist said, 'Hindu chronology'. 'Goodness gracious!' exclaimed the man at the desk. One can imagine the sub-divisional officer saying to the people, 'Here am I who can tell you everything about the achievements of British rule in India. Why then should you want to read the discourses of Krishna and Arjuna who knew nothing about Hindu-Muslim differences, the August Offer, Mr. Churchill's interpretation of the Atlantic Charter regarding its applicability to India, the Cripps Mission and other cognate subjects. News from South India is more reassuring. In a speech at Bangalore, Sir Colin Garbett, President of the Central Recruitment Board (for the selection of candidates for emergency commissions) drew attention to the teachings of the *Bhagavadgita*. He observed that India's most sacred book the *Bhagavad-*

*gita* said that action was better than inaction, and that it behoved them to take right action. There was, therefore, Sir Colin said, no question as to whether they should fight aggression or not. It is to be hoped that now the *Bhagavadgita* is safe.

Let us see for a while, why was the war of *Mahabharata* waged. Arjuna, the warrior prince, was to vindicate his brother's title, and destroy a usurper who was oppressing the land; it was his duty as prince, as warrior, to fight for the deliverance of his nation and to restore order and peace. The burden of the *Gita* is this: Have no personal interest in the event; carry out the duty imposed by the position in life; realise that Isvara, at once Lord and Law, is the real doer working out the mighty scheme of evolution which will ultimately end in bliss and peace; be identified with Him by devotion; perform the duty without any other end in view; fight without passion or desire, without anger or hatred.

Besides this, the *Gita* may also be quoted to inculcate equanimity and balance of mind when one is face to face with a great calamity. For according to the teaching of this great book everyone is taught that sooner or later one has to cast off one's mortal coil. There is nothing so certain as death, whether it is due

to the ravages of bombing and gun-shots or any epidemic, or natural death. No human being can escape the relentless hands of death. This inevitable situation is theoretically accepted by many but not actually borne in mind in daily life. We try ever so many ways of escape from the jaws of death, altogether forgetting that it is not really possible to do so.

No doubt, there is some difference between the attitude of those who know something of the problem of life and death and those who do not. To those whose outlook is wholly materialistic, death is the cessation of life, while those whose outlook is spiritual, who believe in the continuity, indestructibility and eternity of life, have no fear of death.

Now the attitude of some who have had the inestimable privilege of studying and understanding the essential teachings of the *Bhagavad-gita* should be obviously different from those who do not believe in it. The most essential and fundamental problem discussed in the second Adhyaya is the relative value of man's life and death. The Blessed Lord Sri Krishna has fully, clearly and unambiguously explained to his favourite disciple, Arjuna, the futility of grieving over the inevitable. If death is the cessation of man's hopes and aspirations no amount of grief and lamentations would bring him back to them. If however, his innermost nature is invulnerable, free from change, decay and death, no weapon can cleave him, burn him and destroy him. The moment this conviction is borne in mind, he ceases to fear death and his mind becomes calm and tranquil. The shatterings of outer form would never disturb his mind. He fully knows that no weapon however destructive, can

touch his inner being which is deathless and immortal.

So the right attitude for a believer in the teachings of the *Bhagavadgita* should be sought to cultivate inward and unshakable conviction in the reality of man's inner Being and to cast off all fear of the total disappearance of this Essence with the death of the body.

This conviction by no means implies recklessness in any shape or form. No one can ever be absolved from his *Swadharma*. If he is a householder it is his duty to protect and look after his family. He should not, therefore, expose himself unnecessarily to any danger. But if it does come, he should face it manfully.

Defenceless and weaponless as we Indians are, we cannot possibly do anything to protect our lives and limbs; nor can we inflict injury on our foe as a defensive measure. So the best course for us would be, to be non-violent as far as possible and be prepared to lay down our bodies if we are attacked unawares, always remembering that 'the Real Self of man is not born nor doeth It die; nor having been, ceaseth It any more to be; unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient. He is not slain when the body is slaughtered'. (*Gita* II. 20)

All that has been stated above is no piece of theological dogma to be taken as an article of blind faith. The *Gita*, in the words of Sri Krishna Prem, 'is not concerned with beliefs but with knowledge, and the above is a truth that becomes clear to the disciple even at this stage, and a calm descends upon the Soul as it realises that neither can one slay, nor is any slain. Forms and personalities come and go inevitably, but that which lies behind them all can neither come nor go, for It for ever IS'.

There is another reflection in the book which would give us heart and courage to face any danger, however heart-rending it may be. If life is not laid down willingly by man Death would overtake him at its own right time in the shape of any epidemic, accident, old age or natural decay. That is the law of Nature. How can this solid seeming world of names and forms survive for ever? Constant change, decay, and death are its very nature. Every outer form is but a passing phantom show which veils from sight the true and unchanging reality. 'The unreal hath no being; the real never ceaseth to be.' Where is then room for lamentation, grief and fear? Are these weighty arguments not enough to bring us

sufficient peace of mind and untroubled heart? If there is any time when our knowledge of the Divine words can be tested, it is the present one.

Thus great books have their permanent message for all situations. The present situation compels us to seek for the solution which the *Gita* may give. It may at least suggest the two lines of thought given above. However, in the midst of the darkness in which the whole world is enveloped today, the only ray of hope and light can come from the source of our being, the Life of our lives and the Supreme Being whom we call by various names. Let us draw ourselves to Him as closely as possible and take refuge in Him.

## NATIONALISM AND RELIGION

*By Swami Asehananda*

Critics contend that India cannot attain her liberation so long as she is not a nation. To unify the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs and the Christians and forge them into a nation is, to these critics, rather an impossible task. To the Socialists the task is equally stupendous. Often we hear religion being declared by the Socialists a stumbling block in the way of the realisation of complete independence. And so they plan to scrape off religion altogether from the scheme of things and cast it off as a tattered garment. They cite the example of Bolshevik Russia where religion has been knocked on the head. But is this a solution after all? What was good for Russia might not be good for India. For, these countries are poles apart in point of

history, tradition and national genius. The Socialists may be well-intentioned in their motives but the method adumbrated by them is not suitable as it runs counter to the genius of the race.

History will bear witness to the fact that the presence of different denominational faiths is no bar to the building up of a nation, provided the attitude of the powers that be is benign. Take the case of England. Under Queen Mary, did not Roman Catholics burn the Protestants alive although both paid allegiance to Christ and took his name in oath? The antagonism between Hindus and Muslims is nothing in comparison with the bitter hatred and rancorous feelings that were raging between the two groups of the Christian faith

during the reign of Queen Bess. The Protestants took advantage of the opportunity and persecuted the Catholics. In North Ireland not long ago, there was an unholy performance of breaking heads in the holy name of religion. But did all these prevent England from growing into a nation? Does not the England of today pride herself as the champion of democracy and freedom? Nature is everywhere almost the same. Its laws are universal. What is applicable there is also applicable here. Why should riots here stand in the way of national solidarity any more than riots there? Is it sound logic to say that India cannot attain to unity and grow into a nation with her diverse customs and creeds while the same has been possible in Europe in spite of its shedding rivers of blood?

Viewing constructively, the tale will tell a different story. Sympathetic critics with a mature understanding have held that religious differences in India are more imagined than real. They have been exaggerated and stressed too much by propagandists and vested interests. Deep down there is a fundamental unity which has lived through centuries from the days of the great Moghul Emperor, Akbar, even to our present time. This core of unity is the bed-rock on which the two great civilisations have met.

An unbiased mind will declare without any reservation whatsoever, that points of unity are far stronger and much greater than points of division. In times of supreme trial, when floods, famine or earthquake have worked untold havoc, help has come forward from all quarters, unsought and with the utmost spontaneity. Then, the doling out of charity was not restricted to the

particular community of the donor. Large-heartedness overstepped all bounds of exclusiveness. In a national crisis, it could be seen, that Hindus and Mussalmans, Parsees and Christians, had sunk all religious differences and had rendered unstinted succour to everyone in need. This will set at naught the theme of wishful thinkers and self-seeking diplomats that religions in India are a dead-weight and a hindrance in her onward march towards the goal of freedom. Why should it be so? Are not all religions branches of the same tree which draws its vital sap from One Universal God, whom the Muslims worship as Allah, the Christians adore as the Father in Heaven and the Hindus as Brahman, the nameless ineffable presence which is accessible to all without any distinction of caste, colour or creed?

A true Hindu is a brother to a true Muslim. Religion and patriotism have no quarrel between them. They go hand in hand. In order to be a pious Muslim or a devout Hindu none need forget or turn his back against the land that has given him birth. On the contrary he must rise up in indignation against those who disfigure the fair name of religion and use it as an instrument for national disruption. He must be ready to shed the last drop of his blood and to sacrifice his all for the service of his motherland and to wipe away the last vestige of communalism fomented by small minds. For, he considers himself as an Indian first and an Indian last, and what does it matter to him if one worships in a temple, one in a mosque and another in a church? The soul of India is alive and virile. Its mission is to show the world torn asunder by greed and rancour, that Indian nationalism will

create and not destroy, will feed and not feed on other nations. On the attainment of her long overdue liberation she will surely discharge her duty of bringing peace to the war-worn nations. It is refreshing to note that men like Mr. Ramsay Macdonald concur with us. His picture of India in his book, *Awakening of India*, should clear the mist from the eyes of uncharitable critics and prejudiced minds. It should present them the proper perspective. As the facts were gathered from his personal experience they are entitled to our attention :

It was the evening of a Matrupuja. The mother Goddess had been dwelling in the midst of the people for some days and this night, with music and procession, she was to be taken down to the Ganges..... In India to-day it is always 'the Mother', and it was her festival that bade us farewell.

When one thinks over all those extraordinary impressions of things new, weird and mysterious, he seems to be drawn below the superficial differences seen at the silversmiths' corner in the bazaar of Bombay. These differences are the light split up into its fragments, iridescent, many-coloured, glancing on the surface of things. Beneath there is unity, a blending of differences in a co-ordinating idea. Even the Mahomedan who lives away from the borders becomes enchanted with India and assimilates something of the spirit of the Vedas. The great mosque at Ajmere, open

as it is to the foot of Muslim and Hindu alike, symbolises the real mind of India. So too at Rampal, the ancient capital of Eastern Bengal, one sees Hindu images in the verandah of the mosque and in similar places of worship throughout the country, the "common altar" is not unusual. The Mother they all worship in India, the India which stretches from the Himalayas to the southernmost part of Ceylon. That is the India of their religion, the India within whose borders are the sacred shrines scattered far apart, north, east, south and west, but all sacred to the people. Every Indian holds the Himalayas in religious reverence. The crowd on the banks of the Ganges at Benares represent every phase and race of Hindu life. Hail O ye Ganges ! Jamna, Godavari, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri. Come and approach these waters, is the prayer of the northern Hindu who perhaps will never see one of the sacred rivers but to whom the land to which they belong is a sacred personality. The Buddhist in Ceylon breathes precisely the same prayer because he too grasps the same sense of national unity. The land embodies his religion as the image of his God embodies the cult of his worship. The life below is that of a united India, a religious as well as a geographical unity and that life will continue to strive for political expression. India is a vision of the Hindu faithful, as Heaven is a vision of the Christian saint.

We will add one thought more : 'India is also the dream, the earthly paradise of devout Muslims, the true followers of the Holy Prophet, the Messenger of Peace'.

# THE MEANING OF THE WORD HINDUISM'

*By Swami Vivekananda*

The word Hinduism, by which it is the fashion nowadays to style ourselves, has lost all its meaning; for this word merely meant those who lived on the other side of the river Indus (in Sanskrit, Sindhu). This name was murdered into 'Hindu' by the ancient Persians, and all people living on the other side of the river Sindhu were called by them Hindus. Thus this word has come down to us, and during the Mahomedan rule we took up the word ourselves. There may not be any harm in using the word, of course, but as I have said, it has lost its significance; for you may mark that all the people who live on this side of the Indus in modern times do not follow the same religion as they did in ancient times. The word, therefore, covers not only Hindus proper, but Mahomedans, Christians, Jains and other people who live in India.<sup>1</sup> I therefore would not use the word Hindu. What word should we use then? The other words which alone we can use, are either the Vaidiks, followers of the Vedas, or better still, the Vedantists, the followers of Vedanta.

## THE VEDAS

There are certain great principles in which, we, whether Vaishnavas, Saivas, Saktas or Ganapatyas, whether belonging to ancient Vedantists or the modern ones, whether belonging to the old rigid sects or the modern reformed ones,—are all one and whoever calls himself a Hindu,

believes in these principles. Of course, there is a difference in interpretation, in the explanation of these principles, and that difference should be there, and it should be allowed, for our standard is not to bind every man to our own position; it should be a sin to force every man to work out our own interpretation of things, and to live by our own methods. All will agree that we believe the Vedas to be the eternal teachings of the secrets of Religion. We all believe that this holy literature is without beginning and without end, coeval with nature, which is without beginning and without end, and that all our religious differences must end when we stand in the presence of that holy book: we are all agreed that this is the last court of appeal in all our spiritual differences. We may take different points of view as to what the Vedas are. There may be one sect which regards one portion as more sacred than another, but that matters little so long as we say that we are all brothers in the Vedas, that out of this venerable, eternal, marvellous books, has come everything that we possess to-day, good, holy and pure.

This mass of writing called the Vedas is not the utterance of persons. Its date has never been fixed, can never be fixed, and according to us, the Vedas are eternal. The meaning of the statement is not, as is erroneously supposed by some, that the words of the Vedas are Anadi, but that the spiritual laws inculcated by the

<sup>1</sup> In foreign lands the word Hindu is used in this broad sense to denote any native of India, irrespective of his religious denomination. The Hindu Mahasabha uses the word to denote the followers of all religions that had their origin in India such as Jainism, Sikhism, Brahmoism, etc.—*Eds.*

Vedas are such. The correct meaning of the statement, 'the Vedas are beginningless and eternal' is that the law of truth revealed by them to man is permanent and changeless. Logic, Geometry, Chemistry, etc., reveal also a law or truth which is permanent and changeless, and in that sense, they are also beginningless and eternal. The Vedas do not owe their authority to anybody, they are themselves the authority, being eternal—the knowledge of God. They were never written, never created, they have existed throughout time; just as creation is infinite and eternal, without beginning and without end, so is the knowledge of God, without beginning and without end. And this knowledge is what is meant by the Vedas (viz., to know).

The Vedas are an accumulated mass of Divine Wisdom, which are sometimes manifested or at other times remain unmanifested.

They are not considered as inspired in the Western sense of the word, but as the sum-total of the knowledge of God, omniscience. This knowledge comes out at the beginning of a cycle and manifests itself; and when the cycle ends, it goes down into minute form. When the cycle is projected again, that knowledge is projected again with it. The mass of knowledge called the Vedanta was discovered by personages called Rishis, and the Rishi is defined as a *Mantradrashta*, a seer of thought; not that the thought was his own. Whenever you hear that a certain passage of the Vedas came from a certain Rishi, never think that he wrote it, or created it out of his mind; he was the seer of the thought which already existed, it existed in the universe eternally. This sage was the discoverer; the Rishis were spiritual discoverers. The

Rishis were only the discoverers of the Mantras or Eternal Laws; they merely came face to face with the Vedas, the Infinite mine of knowledge, which has been there from time without beginning.

Truth is of two kinds: (1) That which is cognisable by the five ordinary senses of man, and by reasonings based thereon; (2) That which is cognisable by the subtle, supersensuous power of Yoga. Knowledge acquired by the first means is called science, and knowledge acquired by the second is called the Vedas. The person in whom this supersensuous truth is manifested, is called a Rishi and the supersensuous truths which he realises by this power are called the Vedas.

Beyond the senses men must go in order to arrive at the truths of the spiritual world, and there are even now persons who succeed in going beyond the bounds of the senses. These are called Rishis, because they come face to face with spiritual truths. The proof therefore of the Vedas is just the same as the proof of this table before me, *Pratyaksham*, direct perception. This I see with the senses, and the truths of spirituality we also see in a superconscious state of the human soul.

Those who realized are the sages whom we find in the Vedas, and we understand how this Rishi is the name of a type, of a class which every one of us as true Hindus, is expected to become at some period of our life, and becoming which, to the Hindu means salvation. Not belief in doctrines, not going to thousands of temples, nor bathing in all the rivers in the world, but becoming the Rishi, the *Mantradrashta*, that is freedom, that is salvation. Religion is not in books, nor in theories, nor in dogmas,

nor in talking, not even in reasoning. It is being and becoming. Aye, my friends, until each one of you has become a Rishi and come face to face with spiritual facts, religious life has not begun for you, until the super-conscious opens for you, religion is mere talk, it is nothing but preparation.

This Rishi state is not limited by time or place, by sex or race. Vatsyayana boldly declares that this Rishi-hood is the common property of the descendant of the sage, of the Aryan, of the non-Aryan, of even the *Mlechha*. Vatsyayana says : 'He who has attained through proper means the direct realization of *Dharma*, he alone can be a Rishi, even if he is a *Mlechha* by birth. Thus it is that in ancient times, Vasishtha born of an illegitimate union, Vyasa the son of a fisher-woman, Narada the son of a maid-servant with uncertain parentage and many others of like nature, attained to Rishi-hood. Truly speaking, it comes to this, then, that no distinction should be made with one who has realized the truth.'

### THE KARMA KANDA

This mass of writing, the Vedas, is divided principally into two parts, the Karma Kanda and the Jnana Kanda—the work portion and the knowledge portion, the ceremonial and the spiritual. The work portion consists of various sacrifices; most of them of late have been given up as not practicable under present circumstances ; but others remain to the present day in some state or other. The main ideas of the Karma Kanda, which consists of the duties of man, the duties of the student, of the householder, of the recluse and the various duties of the different stations of life, are followed more or less, down to the present day.

The Karma Kanda of the Vedas has almost disappeared from India. Very little of our life to-day is bound and regulated by the orders of the Karma Kanda of the Vedas. In our ordinary lives we are mostly Pouranikas or Tantrikas, and, even where Vedic texts are used by the Brahmins the adjustment of texts is mostly not according to Vedas, but according to the Tantras or the Puranas. As such to call ourselves Vaidikas in the sense of following the Karma Kanda of the Vedas, I do not think, would be proper. But the other fact stands, that we are all Vedantists. Under that one name Vaidantika, come in all our various sects whether dualists or non-dualists.

The ceremonies and the fruits of Karma Kanda are confined within the limits of the world of Maya and therefore they have been undergoing and will undergo transformation according to the law of change which operates through time, space and personality. Social laws and customs, likewise, being based on this Karma Kanda, have been changing and will continue to change hereafter. Minor social usages also will be recognised and accepted when they are compatible with the spirit of the true scriptures and the conduct and example of holy sages. But blind allegiance only to usages such as are repugnant to the spirit of the Shastras and the conduct of the holy sages has been one of the main causes of the downfall of the Aryan race.

### JNANA KANDA

With regard to the whole Vedic collection of truths discovered by the Aryan race, this also has to be understood that those portions alone which do not refer to purely secular matters and which do not merely record tradition or history, or merely provide

incentives to duty form the Vedas in the real sense. It is the Jnana Kanda or the Vedanta only that has for all time commanded recognition for leading men across Maya and bestowing salvation on them through the practice of Yoga, Bhakti, Jnana or selfless work ; and as its validity and authority remain unaffected by any limitations of time, place or persons, it is the only exponent of the universal and eternal religion for all mankind. The spiritual portion of our religion is in the second part, the Jnana Kanda, the Vedanta, the end of the Vedas, the gist, the goal of the

Vedas. The essence of the knowledge of the Vedas was called by the name of Vedanta, which comprises the Upanishads ; and all the sects of India whether Dualists, Qualified Dualists, Monists or the Saivites, Vaishnavites, Saktas, Souras, Ganapatyas--if there is any sect in India which dares to come within the fold of Hinduism, it must acknowledge the Upanishads of the Vedas. They can have their own interpretations, and can interpret them in their own way, but they must obey the authority. That is why we want to use the word Vedantist instead of the word Hindu.

## SRI RAMANUJA AND SRI MADHVA

*By Sri. Srinivasa Rao Murdi, B.A., LL.B.*

The work of Sri Madhvacharya is but a continuation of that of Sri Ramanuja and his school. Both have led a vigorous protest against the Advaitist teachings of Sri Sankara : both have denounced the doctrine of Maya Vada with all strength and vigour ; both have been the staunch upholders of uncompromising monotheism ; both have propounded the supremacy of Sri Narayana ; both have laid down the path of salvation through Bhakti, the doctrine of *prapatti* or self-surrender. The crown and glory of Sri Vaishnavite teaching has its counterpart in the doctrine of *Ekanta Bhakti* among Madhvatas. The glorious Vaishnavite temples, the still greater hymnology and the mode of worship and processional magnificence have through all the ages attracted the Madhvatas. Conjeevaram, Srirangam, and Tirupati are equally dear to the hearts of Madhvatas. Sri Venkateshwara of Tirupati has been the

tutelary deity of many a Kannada family and Brahmotsavam at Tirupati invariably attracts thousands of pious pilgrims to the sacred seven hills. Besides these similitudes there have been occasions when the leaders of both the Vaishnavite schools have worked in harmony. The great Vedanta Desika presided over the Sabha wherein Vidyaranya of Sankara school and Akshobhya Tirtha of the Madhva school disputed about the teaching of *Tatramasi* and the Master gave the verdict in favour of Akshobhya Tirtha. Another classical instance of co-operation is that of the demarcation of the boundaries of Sri Ranganatha temple at Srirangam and the nearby Jambukesvara Saivite temple in the same island. Sri Vyasa Raya by common consent ran fast by holding his breath from Srirangam and reached the precincts of the Saivite temple and thereby the area of the Sri Ranganatha temple was extensively

extended. The third instance is that of close co-operation between the Vaishnavite Kannada poet-saint, Vai-kunta Das of Belur and Sri Vediraj Swami of Sode Mutt, Purander Das and Kanaka Das.

Such co-operation in the past has had its parallel in the modern times. The late Madhva Guru of the Uttara-dhi Mutt, Sri Satya Dhyan Tirth, used to invariably invite and honour the Pandits of Visishtadvaita school. According to the *Padmapurana*, the Bhakti school arose in Dravida Desa, spread to Karnataka and Maharashtra and languished in Guzerat. This school of Ramanuja has been the direct inspirer of the Vaishnava movements in North India led by Ramanand and his disciples. The Madhva school of Vaishnavism is a Karnataka counterpart and its direct offshoot is Bengal Vaishnavism.

The basic authorities of both the schools are almost the same. The Prasthanatraya—The Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Gita—according to Sri Madhva's commentary and system are compendiously termed Sanakadi or Brahma Sampradaya. The supremacy of Hari or Narayana is the first article of the creed, the One Independent, All-Powerful, Immanent Being pervading the Universe. Only Sri Laxmi is co-extensive with the Lord through all the ages from Brahma downwards to the infinitesimal created being, though real, with a separate existence. There is no independence but *Datta Swatantrya* or delegated power of authority depending upon the will of Sri Hari. The sentient beings have been graded in a serial rank and according to the difference subsisting right upto the moment of salvation, when the released souls, though having *Samipya*, *Sarupya* and *Sayujya*, will

be engaged in prayer and devotion to the Lord in the strict order of their merits. In fact the tricotomony between God, the Soul and Matter, has been pushed to its logical sequence and termed Panch-Bheda. The Lord is approachable through Bhakti though the medium of Vayu and the grace of Lord is the final coping stone of all human sentient beings who attempt to approach the feet of the Lord.

The history of Vaishnavism in Karnataka has had a role quite reverse to that of its evolution in Dravida Desa. The Alwar-poet-saints preceded the Acharyas; whereas in Karnataka the Acharyas preceded the Dasas, as the Kannada Vaishnavite leaders are called. The Alwars are treated as the Amsas of the Lord; whereas the Karnataka tradition is that the poet-saints were the incarnations of lesser deities, sent down to carry on the behest of the Lord. Another point worthy of note is that the position of the Acharyas is absolutely supreme among the Madhvases.

The Madhva system of philosophy and theology, propounded by Sri Madhva in 37 works is not a new creation but an interpretation of original authorities by means of commentaries. Madhva does not lay claim to any originality of his own but insists upon his being a humble follower of Sri Vyasa and to carry on the behest of his Lord and Master. Jaya Tirtha of Sudha Nyaya fame, Vyasa Raya Swami of Chandrika and Tarka Tandava works, Vijayendra Tirtha, the controversialist, and Raghavendra Tirtha the annotator of Sri Madhva's works are the principal pontifical builders of Madhvism.

The lay Sanskritic leaders of the Vyasa-Kuta school have furthered the cause of the pontifical leaders.

The Kannada lay and pontifical poet-saints have proceeded on the same lines through the medium of Kannada, through songs, Sulaidis and Ugabhogas. In this connexion Purander Das is the principal figure followed by Kanaka Das, Vijaya Das, Jagannath Das and others and this succession of Kannada writers has languished within the last 25 years. The Kannada hymnology does not occupy as high a place in Madhva circle as the Dravidian hymns of the Alwars, which are termed as Ubhaya Vedas, though popularly Kannada Das-Kuta litera-

ture is called Dasopanishad. It is but a descriptive term.

The Kannada poet-saints were no anchorites residing at distances far from the madding crowds' ignoble strife. They were house-holders engaged in day-to-day business of the world, carrying on the behest of the Lord through their songs and verses. They were inspired by a catholicity of spirit which is rarely to be seen in these days of International Fellowship of Religions. They brought down the quintessence of Madhva philosophy to the threshold of common folk.

## HOLY WISDOM

*Swami Yatiswarananda*

"Only till the world seeks out Thy Feet for its fearless abode, it is assailed by sorrow, desire, disgrace and the all-grasping covetousness, and the wicked attachments as 'This is mine' and 'This is mine,' the root of all affliction in respect of wealth, house and friend and relation." (*Bhagavatam*)

"O Lord, so long as man may continue to see this body and other things as different from Atman—a notion which has its strength in Thy Maya appearing as Indriyas and their objects, this Samsara may not cease to be, though baseless, and it will continue to bring hosts of miseries, as consequences of action."

"O God, even Rishis fall into Samsara who, here regardless of devotion to Thee, have by day their senses and organs wholly occupied and tossed about in seeking after worldly objects and who by night, immersed in sleep, are every moment disturbed by thoughts of their fancied objects and whose labours to attain their objects are thwarted by Providence."

"On the other hand, O Lord, Thou dwellest in the lotus of Thy votaries' hearts purified by means of devotion; Thou art one whose way is perceived through the study of the Holy Scriptures; and in order to show Thy grace, to the righteous, O Lord, Thou manifestest Thyself in whatever form they contemplate Thee."

Though worshipped with great preparation and attention by the gods who cherish desires in their hearts, the Lord is not very much pleased with them ; for He is the one friend and the ruler from within, dwelling in all beings, who delights in His Bhaktas' showing compassion to them all—a quality which is never known to the wicked." (*Bhagavatam*)

The Bhakta's ego is connected with the Divine; our ego is separated from the Divine. We think we are free, but our freedom is more or less the freedom of the animal. Sri Ramakrishna feels free because of his unity with the Divine.

We must meditate in the space of infinite consciousness of which our own point of consciousness is only a point. In order to go to the terrace a narrow staircase is enough, but the terrace itself is very vast.

Always our consciousness should be made to expand, and this consciously, to come in touch with the vaster consciousness in which we are included.

Retaining the purified individuality we become conscious of the Whole as well as of all others that have a place in this Whole. Now we have too much body-consciousness, impulse-driven, impulse-bound. Minimise your body-consciousness first of all. This can only be done through leading a perfectly clean life and through raising the centre of one's consciousness and making the energy flow through higher channels.

## AS BY FIRE

Sometimes I feel so passionate a yearning  
For spiritual perfection here below,  
This vigorous frame with healthful fervour burning,  
Seems my determined foe.

So actively it makes a stern resistance,  
So cruelly it sometimes wages war  
Against a wholly spiritual existence  
Which I am striving for.

It interrupts my soul's intense devotions,  
Some hope it strangles of divinest birth,  
With a swift rush of violent emotions  
Which link me to the earth.

It is as if two mortal foes contented  
Within my bosom in a deadly strife,  
One for the loftier aims for souls intended,  
One for the earthly life.

And yet I know this very war within me,  
Which brings out all my will-power and control,  
This very conflict at the last shall win me  
The loved and longed-for goal.

The very fire which seems sometimes so cruel  
Is the white light, that shows me my own strength.  
A furnace, fed by the divinest fuel,  
It may become at length.

Ah ! when in the immortal ranks enlisted  
I sometimes wonder if we shall not find  
That not by deeds, but by what we're resisted,  
Our places are assigned.

—From *E. W. Wilcox' Poems.*

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES SINCE 1905 : VOL. II. PART III. BY BENOY KUMAR SARKAR. PUBLISHED BY MOTILAL BANARSIDAS, SAID MITHA ST., LAHORE. 1942. PAGES 356. PRICE RS. 5.

Sociology is of comparatively recent origin in the West. In India, however, it is many centuries old. Her hoary sages have laid the foundations of the science long ago with a true insight into the workings of human nature and described its practical elaboration in wonderful detail within the framework of Varnashrama suited, of course, to the conditions and needs of their own times. It is the task of the modern Indian sociologist to rescue the science from the dust of ages and restate its principles in modern language so as to bring the light of ancient wisdom to bear on the solution of the many intricate questions of the present day. By his deep scholarship, versatile learning, wide international experience and mastery of both ancient and modern sociological thought Dr. Benoy Kumar Sarkar is highly fitted to undertake this task. The book under review is a noteworthy attempt in this direction. It gives a critical review of the contributions of eminent social philosophers of the world during a period, which, according to the author, saw the birth of a new epoch of world-culture and civilisation.

Dr. Sarkar is no believer in sociological *advaita*. He holds that life's philosophy cannot afford to be monocratic or monistic. "At no point of time" he points out early in the book, "can any one slogan, category or ism explain all the diverse ideas and ideals, institutions and movements, obtaining in a single country, no matter how small its area or population." Hence he discards as unreasonable the attempt to discover a unitary principle or slogan that would cover the heterogeneous facts of life. Dr. Sarkar's idea of progress is also quite in keeping with this realistic view of life. He says that progress, ultimately, is nothing but creative disequilibrium, "a condition of perpetual unrest and eternal conflict between what is and what is not." "He questions the correctness of the ten-

dency to have faith in a goal, in the overthrow of evil by good and goes on to observe: "In my view, a definite goalfulness cannot be maintained as the nature of human remakings or societal transformation. Nor can a final annihilation of evil or *adharma* be demonstrated to be in the nature of social evolution or human destiny. I have, therefore, argued as much against the Hindu Gita and Upanishad theories of progress as against the western theories from Condorcet, Hegel, Marx and Comte to Lenin, Spengler, Hobhouse and Sorokin."

Within the brief span of a review we cannot examine at length the soundness or otherwise of this theory of progress. The alternating phases of the perpetual conflict between the thesis and the anti-thesis, to borrow the language of the Hegelian dialectics, are, no doubt, aptly described by the theory of creative disequilibrium. But it does not provide an adequate basis to properly assess the value or significance of the bewildering facts of life, the constantly changing course of history. Progress without a positive content or purposive aim, subjective or objective is devoid of meaning. In the absence of a clear ideal or goal to be pursued, it is practically impossible to pronounce at any given moment whether mankind is marching forward or backward. 'Goalfulness' need not necessarily deprive progress or human endeavour of its essential dynamism, nor rob 'disequilibrium' of its creativity. The incessantly recurring fight between the forces of good and evil of *dharma* and *adharma* should not blind Dr. Sarkar to the possibility of transcending thereby to a stage beyond the play of these and other opposites, wherein alone life finds its ultimate meaning and fulfilment, without which this cosmic drama will be nothing but a cruel farce.

Dr. Sarkar's understanding of human nature also suffers from the same defect that vitiates his theory of progress. He holds that human personality is a permanent amalgam of good and evil and that the *dharma-adharma* pattern of the human psyche has been functioning all through the ages. Without minimising the place or importance of the darker forces and irrational elements in the make-up of

human nature and without disputing the value of the conflict between the opposing *dvandvas* in the economy of progress, we may ask Dr. Sarkar if the Upanishadic view of the innate perfection of the human spirit or Atman and the ultimate sublimation of evil in the light of the supreme vision of truth has no sociological implications whatsoever. He has, however, done well to emphasise the basic unity of human nature all over the world and point out that the attempt of some sociologists to draw hard and fast distinctions between race and race in regard to cultural achievements and possibilities of progress is quite unscientific, unsupported by facts of history and highly mischievous.

Dr. Sarkar is a realist in his reading of history. To him the wars of today as of yesterday prove that mankind is hardly ever governed by moral and humane considerations." "The boundaries of peoples, nations or states i. e. nationality and political freedom," he says, "depends in the last analysis almost exclusively on proved, petrol and aircraft." (P. 285). He is, however, aware that the logical outcome of this view is nothing but pure cynicism. Hence to escape this he is forced to recognise the value of ideals as an instrument of progress. The urges of creative disequilibrium, he adds, may always come to mankind from old ideals such as democracy and socialism or new ones like de-albinisation and subversion of Euro-American imperialism i. e. the overthrow of the white man's domination of the world which today furnish the motive power for action to millions of repressed humanity in Asia and Africa.

Social philosophers like Gobinean, Lapouge, Chamberlain and Grant have formulated the theory of race-potentialities, of ethnocentrism. They seek to show on the basis of past history that certain chosen races are the natural rulers of mankind and that the 'backward' races or classes, without any record of past achievement, are eternally destined to live under the domination of the 'superior' ones. Dr. Sarkar disputes the correctness of this theory and rejects it as untrue to the facts of history. He does not deny the influence of the past in shaping the present, but over-historicism or undue obsession of the past has to be guarded against. In the long run, it is the human

will, the creative intelligence of man, the individual urge to progress, not solely the past ancestral tradition, that moulds the destiny of individuals, classes or races. Under the influence of moral or material inspiration, history-less groups and races, he points out, have often by sheer energy recreated themselves and transformed the face of the world. History shows that no race or class is eternally contemptible or inferior and that no 'superior' race or class can eternally maintain its hegemony or efficiency. "The history of civilisation" he observes, "is indeed to all intents and purposes a series of inferior incompetent and worthless groups or races rising to the status of superior, dominant and efficient groups or races." (P. 113)

In proof of the infinite possibilities of progress possessed by humanity everywhere, irrespective of the past, Dr. Sarkar draws attention to the emergence of Japan as the leader of awakened Asia, the rise of new nationalities in Eastern and central Europe as well as the birth of renascent Russia under the Soviet auspices. Nearer home, in India itself is the glorious national revolution inaugurated by the Swadeshi and Swaraj movement in Bengal (1905) and the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement (1836-1902) represent a very significant landmark not only in the political and cultural history of India but of the whole world. Vivekananda, says Dr. Sarkar, started the epoch of India's influence on modern nations. "He proved that in spite of a country being poor and in spite of its being a slave, it was possible for it to influence, to convert and to conquer the world. The beginnings of a new Indian Empire were thereby laid in no mistakable manner. I call it the Ramakrishna Empire." According to the author, the Ramakrishna Empire is not exclusively the work of the Ramakrishna Mission, but also of the Indian industrialists, scientists, anti-quarians, poets and painters, of religious missionaries, of business managers, of trade unions and of political leaders of all denominations.

The reader must go to the book itself for a fuller interpretation of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda movement to which the author devotes a separate section in Chapter VI. It is a deeply interesting study of one of the most dynamic phases of the

Shakti yoga (energism) and *charaivati* or progress cult of the Hindus, which, the author tells us, were never extinct in any epoch of Indian civilisation. As the successor of the Buddhist Empire, the Ramakrishna Empire, we are told, is growing into a "second specimen of Indian ideological imperialism constituting thereby another epoch of India in world culture".

The sections in the volume dealing with 'Race questions,' 'East and West' and

'De-imperialisation and De-albinisation' are also highly suggestive and stimulating to the students of contemporary world-history. Dr. Sarkar's views on the Indian Freedom movement are given in an appendix which incorporates his preface to Abdus Sadque's book entitled *The Indian Constitutional Tangle*. The printing and get-up of the book leave nothing to be desired.

*M. R. Rāmaswami*

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### A NEW CENTRE AT BOSTON

The dedication of the new Chapel for the Ramakrishna-Vedanta Society at Boston came off on April 1st 1942. The occasion was one of deep spiritual significance. The new home of the Society, a residence admirably suited to become a temple, is located in an ideal spot for quietness, though not far from the heart of the city. It overlooks the Charles River, as the Monastery in India overlooks the Ganges. The many friends and visitors who thronged the spacious rooms were delighted, especially by the Chapel and the Library. It was felt that such a place could not fail to be a powerful influence for the teaching of Truth.

Swami Akhilananda, whose untiring efforts and devotion have been instrumental in causing this new Centre to be opened, conducted the dedication services, with the assistance of two of his brother Swamis, Swami Bodhananda of New York and Swami Vishwananda of Chicago. In the morning, an elaborate form of worship, with all the beauty of Hindu ceremony and ritual, was performed by the three Swamis. At this time, in the presence of only a few very earnest devotees, the Temple was made sacred for the worship of the Divine Being. Then, in the evening, a public dedication service was held, and the place was thronged with the many friends, visitors, and distinguished guests who had come from far and near to be present on the occasion.

The evening program began with several musical selections, beautifully rendered. Then when the large audience had settled

into quietness, the Swamis, who had taken their places on the platform, rose and intoned some ancient Vedic prayers, prayers whose mystic power could be felt.

Following this, Swami Vishwananda of Chicago read a cable from the President of the Ramakrishna Order, India, as well as messages from other Swamis in this country, and from many devoted friends who were unable to come. All expressed their good wishes and prayers for the new work that has been started.

Swami Akhilananda then welcomed the audience to the new home of the Ramakrishna-Vedanta Society, and delivered the opening address.

After him Swamis Bedhananda and Vishwananda, Professor Walter E. Clarke of the Harvard University and Dr. Erle Marlett, Dean of the school of Theology, Boston, also spoke. Prof. Clarke in the course of an enlightening address observed:

"Every civilization, every religious institution builds up around itself certain myths, or perhaps it might be better to say, certain axioms of thought which are accepted on faith without much effort to criticise them and to prove them objectively. They are based on the subjective experience of the nation or group, an attitude of mind towards the universe and human life."

"I am frequently told that my Indian studies are impractical, unnecessary, and useless. To this I always reply by comparing Indian and Chinese studies to the study of astronomy. If we leave out the calendar and navigation, the rest of astronomy serves only to develop an intellectual

curiosity. This intellectual curiosity of astronomy has raised our point of view from a geocentric one to a heliocentric one and we are now going on to a concept of the Sun as part of a galaxy and even to the still larger concept of other galaxies.

"It is just as important to expand our point of view about human life on the earth from a narrow provincial point of view concerning life in a particular village, town, country, state, or nation to an intellectual curiosity about human life in other countries, in other continents, and on the whole earth.

"The population of India is nearly a fourth of the population of the world. Surely it is important to know about its experience with life and its attitude towards the universe.

"The people of India have developed certain axioms of thought which differ widely from those which we in the West have been born with and have come to consider to be the only logical and possible ones.

"The West has tended more and more to consider things to be more important than thoughts, to make ideas correspond to things, and to define religion in terms of social ethics, so much so that salvation often seems to be a by-product of practical activity rather than the chief goal of life. India has always tended to insist that ideas are more important than things, that things must yield to ideas, and to define religion in terms of personal experience rather than in terms of active social service. As a result, in the West there has been greater experimentation with things and with social life. Changes in social life have been rapid but the West has tended to be intolerant in the matter of creed and dogma and to carry them on traditionally and mechanically.

"On the other hand India has been over-comprehensive and very tolerant in the matter of dogma, in the matter of various views about the world, but has tended to be intolerant socially to keep social life going on in a traditional, mechanical, unchanging way. Life in the world is regarded as relatively unimportant—the important thing is self-realization—the perfecting of oneself while performing one's necessary social duties in a traditional way but emphasizing contemplation and

ultimate extrication of oneself from the bonds of transmigration and *karma*. Social life is kept going not for an immediate but for an unseen result for the individual rather than for improving and perfecting human society on earth.

"India has always insisted that the Kingdom of Heaven is within you and that it is not the function of religion to bring about a Kingdom of God on earth. There can be no such thing since the goal of religion is other-worldly. This is much nearer to early Christianity than it is to modern forms of Christianity.

"Indian thought is so much interested in the goal that it tends to neglect the pathway leading to that goal and spends too little effort on the world which it must pass through. On the other hand the West tends to forget the goal and to spend too much of its energies on little practical activities without caring about their meaning.

"The West tends to put an over-emphasis on one necessary aspect of life but India tends to put an over-emphasis on another necessary aspect of life. The mutual influence of one on the other may lead to a more harmonious adjustment of the other-worldly religious attitude of mind and the worldly attitude of mind which would make human life on earth as comfortable and as happy as possible.

"To many in the West who are bewildered by a multiplicity of little activities, the Indian insistence on the necessity of always keeping an ultimate goal in view comes as a helpful corrective.

"The ideal life, according to all Indian teachers, is one which devotes some time to study, some time to the maintenance of the traditional duties of social life, but devotes much time to contemplation with the aim of a personal realization of God. The West needs to spend more time in contemplation. India needs to spend more energy on the forms of social life. We need a balanced effort without over-emphasis on either factor."

At the conclusion of the speeches, Swami Akhilananda expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the students and friends who had contributed in many ways to the acquiring of this new home for the Society. He also thanked the speakers and all those present for coming to share in the joy of the dedication. The Swami then gave his

best wishes to all, and with a final prayer of benediction, the evening service was brought to a close.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION (MAURITIUS BRANCH)

The formal inauguration of the Ramakrishna Mission (Mauritius Branch) took place on Sunday, the 5th April at the spacious Hall of the *Cinema des Familles* at Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius. His Excellency Sir Bede Clifford, the retiring Governor of Mauritius, who attended the inauguration meeting, was received by Swami Ghanananda, Dr. L. Teeluck, Messrs. R. Goburdhan, Bar-at-law, H. P. Gujadhur and Pandit Lakshmanarajan Chowbay. Nearly 500 persons amongst whom were the representatives of the Indian community from all over the Island, and some European and Muslim friends, were present.

The meeting was opened by the Swami, its president, with a prayer in Sanskrit and an English rendering of the same. He then spoke on the ideals and activities of the Mission, traced the growth of the Mauritius Branch and heartily thanked His Excellency and the Council of the Government of Mauritius for having incorporated the Branch by means of a special Ordinance. He made a reference also to the Hon. Mr. G. M. D. Atchia's kindness in readily moving the Bill to incorporate the Branch. Mr. R. Goburdhan and Pandit Chowbay next spoke on the work of the Mission in India and in other countries. His Excellency who spoke last paid a warm tribute to the Mission's inspiring ideals and splendid social service and commended the Mission in Mauritius to one and all for their support and assistance. The function ended in one hour.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, BRINDAVAN MUTTRA, U. P. REPORT FOR 1941.

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Brindavan presents its thirty-fifth annual report.

*The Indoor Hospital* contains 32 beds. The total number of cases treated during the year was 482 as against 477 during last year. The total number of surgical cases in the Indoor Hospital was 20.

*The Outdoor Dispensary* The total number of new cases treated at the Outdoor Dispensary was, 17,008 and the number of repeated cases, 27,755. The Sevashrama also gave financial help to a few helpless men and women to the extent of Rs. 80-6-0.

As the permanent endowments do not yield sufficient income to meet with the requirements, the Sevashrama has to depend much on subscriptions and donations. The total income for the year was Rs. 9,301-14-9 and the total expenses came to Rs. 8,425-14-0.

A permanent kitchen, a Nursing Room for women, a building to accommodate the Outdoor Dispensary seem to be some of the immediate needs of the Sevashrama.

The management thanks the sympathisers and appeals for more help to meet the increasing demands on its resources.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF WORK AT SHERTALAI, TRAVANCORE STATE.

##### A REPORT AND AN APPEAL

Shertalai, a coastal region of Travancore, is the seat of the coir industry. This is the only means of subsistence of its large population. The decline of export trade owing to war conditions has brought this industry to a stand-still causing famine among large sections of the people.

The Ramakrishna Mission has been doing relief work in an area of 17 sq. miles in this region in co-operation with a state-aided relief organisation. The following is a brief account of the relief and reconstruction work done till now.

1. Gave a course of 4 months, training in cotton spinning to 35 children of famine stricken houses. They were given small wages during the period of training and are now in a position to earn two annas a day. The centre arranges to sell their cotton and purchase the yarn spun by them.
2. By introducing alternative crops by distributing seeds and maintaining a small demonstration station, about 250 families have been helped.
3. By sinking a public tank and giving work to 1,240 people.
4. By distributing about 1,400 pieces of cloth and blouses to the famine stricken families.
5. By helping a limited number of sick and indigent people by giving them food or sending them to hospital.
6. By distributing coconut husks among spinners of cocoanut fibre and purchasing the yarn spun by them, 161 poor families are being helped.
7. Repairing and thatching of houses. 200 houses have been taken up for the present.

Lack of funds stands in the way of our expanding this work further. The improvement in the price of cocoanut, however, has not benefitted the poor and the famine-stricken. We appeal to the generous public to come to the help of the unfortunate people of this region. All contributions may be sent to:—

The President,  
**RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA,**  
(Town Branch)  
**TRIVANDRUM.**

THE  
VEDANTA KESARI

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UNIVERSAL ETHICS AND VARNASAMKARA

What we must desire in the interests of mankind at large is that the more highly civilized races should increase faster than the more backward, so as to enable the former to prevail not merely by force, but by numbers and amicable influence.

— Viscount Bryce.

I

'We are witnessing today the end of an era, the agony of a whole civilization, the liquidation of forces in which we have all been steeped.' This is no thickly painted picture but a faithful portrait of the present. The soul of humanity is in agony caused by mutually opposing desires created and strengthened by the long dual pursuit of conflicting ideals. While one section of humanity was after the things of the spirit, the other was on a mad run for material ends. The East sought in contemplation and peace, the ecstasies of inner life, the prizes of the spirit, while the West gave itself up to amassing material prowess and staged the shocking drama of world-conquests. This

sharp division in the interests and pursuits of mankind has seriously affected the inner peace and general health of the organism we call humanity. It is unity of purpose and pursuit and one-pointedness of effort that pull together all the resources of an organism and help it go forward to its self-realisation and fulfilment. In the absence of such essentials, the health and efficient functioning of any organism is bound to suffer. History shows that for some time past there has been an absolute lack of such oneness of resolve and one-pointed effort towards self-realisation on the part of the human race. Nay more, it has been after mutually conflicting ends. It is a simple biological truth that when a limb of an organism indulges in a dissipation, the whole system cannot be free from its evil effects for long. The poison must spread itself over the whole system and must produce a pathological condition both internal and external. Since mankind lost its faith in its

fundamental oneness and consequently lost itself in self-eclipsing and opposing desires, it has developed a morbidity the extreme limits of which are so patent in contemporary history. But the limb that wrongs and insults the organism is affected first, and so the disease has shown itself in the West.

'Western civilization is sick', says William McDougall writing in the early twenties. 'The condition', he adds, 'is similar to that of the neurotic patient who is torn by conflicting and irreconcilable desires; its moral energies are wastefully consumed by the internal conflict, instead of being devoted to profitable work that would carry our civilization onward to higher levels. ....Just as the neurotic patient can be cured only by a complete readjustment of his moral basis by frankly facing and analysing his problem, by going down to his moral foundations and laying them anew; so also our civilization can be cured not by any tinkering with symptoms, by moral exhortations or by any sporadic acts of charity.....but only by facing our moral problem, diagnosing its true nature and thinking out a real solution of it.' What is made obvious and what in fact is the supreme necessity of the times is the urgency of an adequate ethical system in the place of the ethical hodge-podge that now holds sway.

## II

In the task of evolving an adequate ethic and restoring to the soul of humanity peace and tranquillity and inspiring man to profitable and ethical action, it is not so much extraneous elements that count as the readjustment of moral foundations and the purification of the sources of ethical inspiration. The great contributory

factor towards these is the recognition of the invulnerable Spiritual Unity of humanity. That all primary ethical and spiritual data of the whole world of mankind base themselves on the recognition of the real Spiritual Unity of mankind confirms the soundness of our postulate. The alpha and omega of the highest ethical codes that have been formulated up to the present has been this unity, the very basis of all existence. It is in the name of this unity that we are all commanded to love our neighbour, whether he be friend or foe; for in reality on the plane of the spirit all men are equal and integral parts of one indissoluble whole.

Such a unity then denotes two aspects: the spiritual and the social, the social being inspired by the spiritual. While the spiritual side emphasizes the essential oneness of life and its consequent unity, the social phase urges in individuals social virtues and their application in ethical, altruistic social action. This is the twin basis of universal ethics which religions preach. The linking of the spiritual with the social aspect aids religion to achieve two of its foremost ends simultaneously, individual salvation and collective welfare. But this kind of ethics holds no appeal to the modern man of the West. He gives only a theoretical allegiance to the universal system. In the West where the nation is installed as the divinity, the national ethics always comes to the fore. When the two systems of ethics, the universal and the national conflict, men in the West follow in the main the dictates of national ethics. And they justify their conduct on the ground of urgent practical necessity. The universal ethics, as it is, has ceased to command their respect and allegiance. By this

they have forfeited the vision of the Spiritual Unity underlying humanity ; and led by their preference for expediency instead of ethics the West has drifted towards a pernicious oversimplification of universal ethics.

They interpret the unity implied in universal ethics as a material entity and not as a spiritual fact. Worse still, they extend this unity to the empirical planes and say that all are created equal with equal endowments and must be given equal rights and privileges. They want to accept literally as an axiomatic truth, the dogma that 'all men are created equal'. They further say that men have equal claims upon their fellows for justice, for humane and considerate treatment and also interpret universal ethics in the much more questionable sense that all men and all races of men are endowed in an equal degree with the same capacities and tendencies. What is urged is a general levelling-up of intellectual and other qualitative distinctions and the breaking down of all empirical barriers. The West wants the form and not the spirit. The insistence on form is seen in the run for democratic forms of government which are in fact utterly bankrupt of the democratic spirit. It is this democracy that prompts its votaries to fight for it in remote corners of the globe but cannot bear to see its devotee sharing its blessings with another brother. Genuine democracy is primarily a spiritual attitude towards the intrinsic worth of an individual and not an economic structure or a political machine. But the West wants to institutionalize this spiritual attitude and it has ended in the standardisation of human beings. It will be shown in the sequel how such wild manifestations of the ultra-

democratic spirit of the times are having baneful repercussions on social solidarity and cultural integrity both in the West and in the East.

### III

It must be clearly borne in mind that the above interpretation of universal ethics is strictly against its basic teaching. 'There exists no unity' writes Count Hermann Keyserling, 'but that which has its throne not only above individuals, but also above all peoples, all religious communities or all particular conceptions of the world.' In other words, the individual belongs to this spiritual unity in a stratum of his nature lying deeper than that in which he belongs to any empirical community. But the West has missed the point in this teaching. The Westerners argue that such unity exists on the empirical plane as well and contend that the application of universal ethics must do away with all empirical distinctions and boundaries and make for a 'universal brotherhood.' To say that individuals have an equal wealth of natural endowment and to urge equal treatment of all is to be unreasonable. We see that no two individuals or nations are alike in point of personality or genius. They differ widely on the empirical plane. No doubt, individuals enshrine the same Divinity in equal measure, but they are on different levels of realisation of this Divinity. It is the manifestation of this inherent divinity that may be called the personality or genius of the individual. Hence individuals must vary widely. To labour at producing an equality on the empirical plane is therefore suicidal both to the individual and to society as it will make for a dead homogeneity, a thing that should be dreaded in society. Unfortunately it

is the same equality which the superficial universal ethics preaches and the results are disastrous.

In a family where no two members are alike in their natural endowments or bent, it is precisely their differentiation that makes possible the efficient discharge of various duties and thus contributes to domestic harmony and peace. What is true of the family is also true of the community, nation and humanity. The law of unity and differentiation underlies all these organisms. An ordering of a family or society without an insight into this law of unity and differentiation cannot yield fruitful results. In so far as the spiritual unity is a self-evident fact, it is not to be laboured after. It is not to be made; it already exists. We cannot perceive the variety at all without perceiving this unity. That attempts are being made in the West to forge this already existing unity shows their anxiety to make up by form what they have lost in spirit. They advocate an irrational levelling-up of distinctions and breaking down of empirical barriers in the name of 'universal brotherhood.'

#### IV

William McDougall contemplating the prospect of a century of universal ethics forecasts certain effects based on some well-founded assumptions. He writes: 'Under the conditions of universal freedom and of political and social equality postulated by the universal ethics, population would tend rapidly to distribute itself unevenly over the surface of the world.' Only recently we entered on the era of extreme facility of human transportation on a large scale and we have good evidence of its effects in promoting vast migrations. And when universal freedom and equality become ethical motives for action, the

migrations are sure to break all records. His second assumption is that peoples of lower culture would multiply rapidly. This is a fact strongly supported by anthropology. It can be shown on statistical evidence that the rate of increase among people of lower culture is far greater than that among civilized people. McDougall's third assumption is a natural corollary of this truth. The chances are that people of higher culture would in all probability rapidly dwindle in numbers and the preponderance of people of lower culture would result in miscegenation and cultural deterioration.

The evil effects of immigrations on older native stocks of population is a fact well borne out by history. Mr. Sisley Huddleton in an article ('Christian Science Monitor' Aug. 4, 1923) writes of the dwindling native population (of France) with corresponding encouragement to immigration as 'one of the gravest problems which presents itself to France.' 'It is estimated' he says, 'that 150,000 Polish workers are with their families in France. It is easy to foresee from this that in a few years there will be at least 1,000,000 Slavs. It is now claimed that the immigration of a few millions of Europeans of slightly lower standard of culture had profoundly affected the racial purity of the native stock of American population even before the 19th century. Such being the case, other things remaining the same, and the immigration taking place at that rate, the degeneration of the native stock of population and the increase of foreign stock must have been tremendous.

That miscegenation of the completest kind would ensue from these conditions, it is impossible to doubt. Wherever different races have lived

in the same area, cross-breeding has occurred to a considerable extent ; it has occurred everywhere race prejudice has been strong and where severe social and legal bars have been placed upon inter-marriage among the races. How then should it not take place very freely where many different races would be closely intermingled, where all social and legal bars to inter-marriage would be removed and where the prevalent ethical sentiment would favour, rather than discourage such marriage ? Thus we see how a wrong interpretation and misapplication of universal ethics pave for miscegenation and race-suicide ending in the evils of *varnasamkara*.

The effects of miscegenation go deeper still in society. It works banefully on the intellectual and cultural purity and standard of the race by accentuating dysgenic selective reproduction. In other words, under the sway of universal ethics when universal freedom of intercourse and the principles of equal opportunity come to reign, the process of a dysgenically differential or adversely selective reproduction rate will be intensified. There takes place a disproportionate increase in the racial stocks of lower culture. This process arrests the operation of natural selection which in the long run paves for the improvement of the human race, for the increase of its intellectual capacities and for the strengthening of the native tendencies that conduce to harmonious social life. Such differential reproduction rate not only arrests this conserving and improving tendency of natural selection, but also puts in its place a tendency that makes for the lowering of the average intellectual and moral endowment of the population of each civilized country. It thus renders each of such

populations less capable in each succeeding generation of producing men of exceptionally high moral and intellectual gifts, those individuals whose activities are the only source of further progress in the intellectual and moral spheres and without whom the level of civilization that we have already achieved cannot be maintained. The unhappy truth of it all is that these are no longer assumptions or forecasts based on them, but are things actually happening in different parts of the globe. There is a general intellectual and moral deterioration as foreshadowed above, tending to bring in a dark age if it is not already on us now.

## V

The standardisation of the individual and society brought on by the technological advance in these years has ominously accelerated the process of degradation indicated above. Standardisation is followed by stratification. In all modern nations, society is stratified ; it contains no castes but social strata. Within this whole range of social strata the broadest and most important distinction is that between the handworkers and the brainworkers. The tragedy of the age seems to be that even this distinction is going to be rounded. There is today a mad run for the unqualified acceptance of the extreme democratic principle dictated by universal ethics. The fell tendency is to give predominant political power to the handworkers and to produce a state of society in which the handworkers by their preponderant numbers and efficient organisation can fight for more favourable conditions of labour and for treating the brainworkers,—the *bourgeoisie* as they call them—as their natural enemies, whose work according to them (handworkers) is of

no value to the community. We have seen the principles of such ultra-democracy carried to and beyond their limit by the Bolsheviks in Russia, in the wholesale slaughter of the brain-working class and the crushing of the remnant to the point of extreme misery. This is an instance in which the impetus of the movement prompted by universal ethics has carried it beyond its natural logical goal. Nevertheless, it exemplifies the tendency and logical, natural goal of the universal ethics expressing itself in pure unmitigated democracy and causing the destruction of the highly-civilized strata of society, who are indeed the salt of civilization. Mr. Langdon Mitchell after a visit to Germany in 1922 writes : '...one sinister phenomenon that impressed me most—the fall of the middle class. ....the scholarship, science, medicine and art of central Europe are actually disappearing.' And, he adds, the result must be that 'the people that produced Luther, must necessarily perish as a creative force; that is their civilization will cease to exist. ....We think of civilization as of the Earth or Air—it cannot conceivably suffer diminution ; but modern civilization and progress are as frail as any weed or yet more frail. For they depend on a class of highly bred human beings with well-trained minds, on a degree of leisure in that class ; and on a selfless enthusiasm. Let the educated men and women of a community become hewers of wood and drawers of water—all is over ; the thing ends ; you have a dark age'. That the shades of such a dark age are falling fast and long on the world it is impossible to doubt.

## VI

India's right approach to universal ethics and her practical and benefi-

cent application of it to society eminently qualify her to show the way for Europe out of this dark age. The Hindu seers grounded their ethics on the realisation of the unity of all existence, on the truth of *tat tvam asi*. To them every man was the individuation of that all-pervading, infinite, universal Divinity the substratum of all phenomena. Hence to them all men are ends in themselves, all men are equal and to be treated equal—not of course as Westerners mean. The Hindu sages insisted on the spiritual equality of men and not on their empirical sameness. For they saw that though all do enshrine Divinity in equal measure, all do not manifest it to the same degree. Each is on a different degree of realisation of his latent Divinity. This is the reason why no two persons are alike in their capacities. Of this truth the Hindu seers were fully alive. They knew that a democratisation of intellectual faculties was an impossibility, and even if it were possible it would be fatal to the interests of society. They foresaw that such standardisation would not only stop individual spiritual development but would make for a highly competitive society the like of which we now witness all over the world. By judicious apportionment of works they guarded against this contingency.

In the *chaturvarnya* — the ancient Aryan social order—the division of labour was according to the natural endowment and bent of individuals, according to their *srabava*. The intellectually and spiritually inclined Brahmanas were to lead spiritual lives and through their lives afford example and precept to society, while the martially inclined Kshatriyas were to be in charge of defence and protection. Duties were assigned fully considering the individual capacities of persons which

naturally drew out the maximum from individuals for society's welfare. The *svabhava* determined one's *svadharma*, i.e., one's specific duty in life by pursuing which whole-heartedly one attains perfection. Thus the *svabhava* which is the aggregate of one's natural endowment was very wisely made by the Hindu genius the pivot on which the internal and social life of the individual turned. The individual was enjoined to seek his salvation which was the same as the full manifestation of his inner Divinity through the efficient discharge of his *svadharma* which yielded in time the twin fruits of individual perfection on the one hand and social welfare and solidarity on the other, simultaneously and spontaneously. It must be remembered that in *chaturvarnya* there was not only the deep recognition of the intrinsic spiritual worth of the individual urged by universal ethics but such recognition was harnessed to social advantage. This is the peculiar glory of the Hindu genius.

The tendencies of universal ethics to run to ultra-democratic lengths already pictured above as rampant in the West were also effectively checked by the ancient Aryan social order. The principle of dividing works according to *gunas* and natural bent was the first safeguard which was ably supported by the golden rule of the Aryan society : every man in his job and a job for every man. This prevented society from becoming competitive. It also ordained with the force of divine law not to step into another's *dharma* (profession) though one's own was felt to be defective, and laid down that such illegitimate preference was worse than death. Thus did the Hindu sages scrupulously guard the chastity and integrity of their social orders which were in days

of yore the flourishing nurseries of Hindu culture and civilization. They knew full well the law that human nature develops its potentialities only when men live as members of stable communities, cemented by strong moral, cultural and spiritual traditions. Civilization takes root and blossoms only in well-cared-for nurseries and not on the trampled market-place of democracy though its fruits in time bestow benefit on one and all. Such blossoming can be aided by the increase of the more civilized class in society who maintain the cultural balance.

## VII

From the welter and chaos of the general levelling-up of the intellectual and other qualitative distinctions brought about by mechanisation and standardisation in the West and hastened by ultra-democratic propensities there come up some thinking and level-headed individuals who declare themselves against such trends and aver that civilization and progress depend on a class of highly-bred human beings with well-trained minds, on a degree of leisure in that class, and on a selfless enthusiasm. Here then the Hindu genius wins another laurel. For such voices from the West are only echoes of what our ancient sages have said by way of insisting on the maintenance of Brahmanas, the preservers of spiritual life, truly the salt of the earth. Sri Sankara in his introduction to the *Gita* says that when through the ascendancy of *adharma* and irreligion, *varnasamkara* results and a dark age is brought on the world, the divine principle manifests itself for maintaining the spiritual balance, and the social orders through the preservation of the Brahmanas, the upholders of the *sanatana dharma*. In India it was

through the maintenance of spiritual life that all else could be maintained, the society being founded and ordered on a spiritual basis. The Hindu seers, we find, have thus anticipated the present calamity more or less, and have guarded against society drifting into perils of standardisation and *varnasamkara* which are jeopardising our national life today. That they have foreseen those possibilities and have made safeguards stands as a monument of their wisdom. But that we their children have facetiously brushed aside their gifts and left their warnings unheeded and have thus invited the present troubles is strange disloyalty to our heritage and a stain on our national escutcheon.

The West is already in the vortex of racial miscegenation and cultural degradation. Standardisation followed the mad run for democratisation. Competition, cruel and heartless, became the rule of society and all higher human values were stamped out from the scheme of life. With the disappearance of the human values, humanity vanished and made man callous and contemptuous of his own life as that of others. The ground was thus ready for the work of slaughter and destruction which has reached its very peak today. The East has long proved her inability to resist the contagion of the socially subversive influences from the West and to the confusion of her cultural and social *melee* is added now the embarrassments and agonies resulting from her unwilling and painful participation in the bloody conflict into which she had been dragged much against herself.

How then shall we redeem ourselves? Shall it be through the rehabilitation of the old Aryan social order? Not quite. No doubt the Aryan social pattern has substantial and most relevant suggestions for the reconstruction we now need most. But to urge a mere reinstatement of that pattern *in form* without adapting it to modern conditions would mean a reversion that is afraid of all contemporary influence. Since the heyday of the *chaturvarnya*, society and State all the world over have undergone considerable transformations. From the old Greek City-State to the modern state is indeed a long way. India can no longer look with lofty disdain on these developments and be contented with her cosy isolation. She is already a unit of an international society and the time has come for her to think, act and strive to realise her ideal consistent with her new setting. Let the ethico-political ideal of society, the legacy of our ancients, inspire a synthesis of the universal and national ethics and evolve a political principle that will find expression in a representative democracy with all provision for the preservation of the highly civilised strata. Let a democracy where the trusteeship of the weak and the mediocre will be in the hands of the selfless and the enlightened come into being. It is hoped that India would learn from the bitter experiences of the West, would turn to her heritage and her social institutions and would pull herself together in a magnificent effort to fulfil her great and glorious destiny in the New World that is dawning before her.

# THE NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VIJAYA FESTIVAL<sup>1</sup>

By Prof. Akshay Kumar Banerjea

## I

### The Inspiration of Autumnal Nature.

The Vijaya Festival is one of the most universally celebrated national festivals of Hindusthan. It is a soul-stirring festival observed with great enthusiasm by all classes of Hindus throughout the length and breadth of India on the tenth day of the bright fortnight of early Autumn. It is the day of the fulfilment of the *Navaratri Utsav*—a festival that lasts nine days and nights—in which the soul of man offers homage to and tries to be in unbroken touch with the soul of the universe. After summer and the rains the soul of the universe seems to reappear before man in a new youthful body, wearing new garments from head to foot and dancing with delight. The open fields adorned with green and yellow vegetation playing cheerfully with the gentle winds, the trees decorated with fresh leaves and fragrant flowers and enlivened by the sweet melodious songs of restless birds, the rivers with their soothing and pellucid waters, the azure firmament glorified and ornamented by the sun, the moon and the stars,—all these inspire the human soul with the idea of the beautiful and the sublime and caress it with the tender and motherly affection of the soul of the universe.

The soul of man comes out with renewed hopes and refreshed energy

from the cage of its narrow outlook and petty egoistic thought and flies into the open arms of the loving Mother, inviting it from all directions. It participates in the free joyful life of the universe. It feels this new life within itself, frees itself from all sense of bondage and depression, and becomes united with all the creatures in brotherly love and sings the glories of the Mother. The Mother had, as it were, been so long playing hide-and-seek with it. She had concealed Herself sometimes behind the scorching and depressing rays of the summer sun, sometimes behind the clouds and rains and storms, sometimes behind the biting and freezing winds of the foggy winter, sometimes behind the fratricidal wars, the plundering campaigns and the abuses of power and intelligence in human society, and so on. But now the Mother has made Her appearance with all the beauties and glories of Her Divine character and stood with unveiled face and open bosom and stretched-out arms before my eyes. Oh, what a joy ! I have discovered my Mother. I have found out my place in the lap of my Mother. I have realised the freedom, the strength, the wisdom, the peace and prosperity, the joy and bliss, which were eternally stored up for me, though concealed from my knowledge,

<sup>1</sup> The autumnal worship of the Divine Mother as Durga is performed in Bengal in the third week of October. The above article explaining the significance of the festival may be read with interest in that connection.—Eds.

in the Mother's breast. She has Herself mercifully come down before the door of my cottage to rescue me from my littleness and take me into Her bosom. Let me rejoice and dance in delight and jump into Her bosom.

It is this Divine inspiration at the sight of Autumnal Nature, which is the spiritual ground of the annual *Navaratri Utsav*,—of the heart-offering to the natural Autumnal Image of the Mother-universe and of the general rejoicing in the union of hearts with hearts in all the ranks of the Hindu society. The *Utsav* has its culmination on the tenth day of the Vijaya festival, when the sense of the Motherhood of the Universe and the brotherhood of all creatures is most enthusiastically demonstrated in various forms, when the loving face of the Divine Mother is sought to be found reflected on the face of every man and woman, on the face of every living creature, on the face of every natural phenomenon. Every face on earth is the *darpan* or mirror of the face of the Divine Mother and this is sought to be actually realised.

## II

### The Historical Background of the Festival

The Vijaya festival as the culmination of the *Navaratri Puja* to the Divine Mother has not only a deep spiritual significance, but it has also a great national significance in India. It is of course difficult to trace the historical origin of this festival with any degree of certainty. Various kinds of legends and traditions are associated with it. The forms in which it is celebrated are also not the same in all the provinces and all the sections of the vast Hindu community. The forms are in their details necessarily influenced by divergent local conditions, sectional traditions, sectarian

modes of self-expression and self-discipline and many other things. But the fact that all the diverse sects of Hindus in all the provinces of India observe this festival with equal enthusiasm is remarkable, and there is one principal historical tradition which is at the foundation of this universally observed festival. It is not historically a religious festival of any particular sect of Hindus, but a national festival of all Hindus as Hindus or Indians.

*Vijaya* means victory. The *Vijayotsav* is a festival in commemoration of some victory, which had a great national importance to all Indians of all ages. According to *Pauranic* tradition this festival is celebrated annually to keep alive the memory and to participate in the glory of the great victory of the Aryan hero, Ramachandra, over the greatest non-Aryan imperialistic Power of his time, viz., the power of the Rakshasa emperor, Ravana, who had his capital in the golden city of Lanka, but whose dominions spread out over a large part of India. The lasting result of this victory was the final triumph of Aryanism over almost the whole of India, the cultural unification of the Aryans and the non-Aryans and the birth of one united Indian nation. The *Vijaya* day is particularly sacred to all Indians, irrespective of religious denominations, because it was on this day that the foundation was laid for the unbreakable unity of Mother India and for the permanent unification of all peoples of all races and creeds residing here as one Indian nation.

## III

### India before Ramachandra

Before the incarnation of Ramachandra the Aryan culture had been almost wholly confined within

Northern India, and the Aryan power had been almost incessantly engaged in the struggle for self-preservation, self-consolidation and self-expansion within the territory known as *Aryavarta*. Mendicants and adventurers had now and then travelled to different parts of the Deccan and sometimes mustered courage even to settle there. But they had been in constant fear of being troubled and killed by the non-Aryan inhabitation of the country,—by the Rakshasas and the *Asuras*, the *Daityas* and the *Danavas*, the *Dasyus* and the *Nishadas*, etc., as the different tribes of the non-Aryans were designated by the Aryans. The non-Aryans had cultures and religions of their own. Some of the races had been far superior to the Aryans from the materialistic and military points of view. There had been among them extraordinary geniuses, who had established mastery over the forces of nature, compelled the gods presiding over the different departments of nature to carry out their commands, fought their enemies from the land, the sea and the air and proclaimed themselves as lords of gods and men. In politics, in industries and commerce, in town-planning and engineering, in military skill and in the art of organisation, the Aryans had much to learn from them. But from the moral and spiritual points of view the Aryans had been far superior. Particular groups of non-Aryans had here and there been charmed and conquered by the moral and spiritual culture of the Aryans; but it had not been able to establish sovereignty over the minds and hearts of the vast masses of civilized and half-civilized and uncivilized peoples of the country. The conflict and struggle between the Aryans and the non-Aryans had continued for centuries.

#### IV Incarnation of the soul of Aryan culture.

It was at this stage that the soul of Aryan culture incarnated itself in the person of Sri Ramachandra and brought almost the whole of India under the banners of Aryanism. He was hardly fifteen years old when under the noble and dynamic inspiration of the heroic saint Viswamitra he freed the south-eastern parts of Northern India from the inroads of the Rakshasas, the chief of whom was a gigantic woman, named Tadaka. Soon after his union with Sita, the young and beautiful princess of Mithila, who was the very embodiment of the ideal of Aryan womanhood, the old emperor Dasaratha wished to put him in charge of his vast dominions. All arrangements were complete. But the Divine Ruler of the destiny of India and the world created most unexpectedly an occasion for his abandoning the comparatively comfortable life of administrator of an established empire and for adopting the incessantly struggling life of an adventurous forest dweller surrounded by hostile non-Aryan tribes. Thus divinely missioned, prince Rama, true to the Aryan ideal of filial devotion, readily submitted to the proposal of his apparently misguided step-mother for his making over the royal crown to her own son, Bharata, and himself taking the garb of a mendicant and retiring to the forest for fourteen years. His newly married wife, Sita, and his heroic brother Lakshmana, set ever-shining examples of conjugal devotion and fraternal love respectively by insisting on accompanying him to the forest and participating in his self-imposed trials and difficulties. Instead of dwelling in the *Tapovanas* (forest-colonies of the ascetics) devoted to

spiritual culture) near by and thus seeking some convenient way of offering worship to Truth and carrying out the parental command, Ramacharidra with his wife and brother made his way to distant forest-regions of the south, where the Aryans had not so long been able to establish themselves. The three noblest representatives of Aryan culture carried the banner of Aryanism, wherever they went. They mixed with all sorts of people, high and low, civilized and uncivilized, and showed to them the true type of manhood and womanhood. Though naturally eager to be friendly to all and hostile to none, the two Kshatriya brothers did not shrink from making proper use of their bows and arrows when circumstances compelled them to do so for the sake of their ideal.

## V

**Contact with Rakshasas**

The unseen hand of the Almighty created another occasion which led to the carrying of the banner of Aryan culture to the southernmost extremities of this great continent. A voluptuous sister of the Rakshasa emperor, Ravana, in the course of her free movements in different parts of the Deccan, happened to see the noble Kshatriya princes in the garb of mendicants and was enamoured by their tender and beautiful, and at the same time manly and heroic, appearance. Being jealous of Sita, she conspired to do away with her and thereby to make easy the path of her winning over the objects of her infatuation. She was however sadly disappointed. The Aryan princes, true to their ideal of moral purity, disdainfully refused the lustful offer of the Rakshasa princess. They at first tried to infuse into her youthful mind the lofty spirit of Aryan chastity, the primary duty of every woman. But when

the Rakshasa princess obstinately persisted in her undignified amorous advances, they felt their ideal of personal and social morality so grossly insulted by this fiendish woman, that in order to get rid of her they went out of their way to disfigure some parts of her face in the presence of Sita.

The powerful Rakshasa army, which had been retained by Ravana in Southern India under the command of two great generals, Khara and Dushana, came forward to take vengeance, but to the utter bewilderment of all the army was routed and vanquished by the two brothers in a short time. This was perhaps the first successful challenge to the unrivalled military power of Ravana in India. The sad tale of the unexpected disaster was conveyed to Ravana. His imperialistic heart was perhaps rudely shaken by some mysterious fear. How could the half-naked mendicants, unassisted by any well-trained army, venture to challenge his imperial authority and bring about a defeat of the imperial army, so well-organised and so scientifically trained and under such able command ! Did they possess any superhuman occult powers ? It was perhaps a mental bewilderment, an unconscious fear of nemesis, a dim sense of moral weakness, a feeble idea of the gross violation of the principles of Truth, Love and Justice at the very foundation of his imperialistic government, that prevented him from meeting the enemy face to face with the military resources at his command. He was impelled to seek revenge in a roundabout way, which was by no means compatible with his usual character. He made an intrigue with one of Rama's old enemies, viz. Maricha. The latter somehow contrived to get both Rama and Laksh-

mana away from the proximity of Sita. Ravana availed himself of this opportunity to approach Sita in the disguise of a begging mendicant, and as Sita was going to perform the householder's duty of offering hospitality to the guest, he forcibly caught hold of her and hurriedly made his escape with her in a chariot to his most strongly fortified head-quarters.

## VI

### Alliance with the Banara race

Insult to womanhood is a sin and crime which no person having true Aryan blood in him or imbued with the Aryan view of human culture and civilization can ever forgive or tolerate. Abduction of a woman from the lawful custody of a man is from the Aryan viewpoint the grossest insult that can be inflicted on his manhood. Rama and Lakshmana, though apparently helpless in those forest regions and non-Aryan territories, became determined to find out the culprit and inflict adequate punishment upon him, whoever and howsoever powerful he might be. They in their distress formed alliance with a group of half-civilized non-Aryans, driven away from the main branch of the race and dwelling in deep sorrow and depression in a small hilly tract. They were called *Banaras* (hardly worthy of being regarded as *Nara* or men), though this race was perhaps more advanced than most of its neighbours in culture. The leader of the group, Sugriva, though the brother of the most powerful chief of the race, Bali, was deprived of his legitimate share in the kingdom for some alleged offence, of which he was not really guilty. He was driven out from his territory with his faithful and pious lieutenants, of whom Hanuman was one. Even his wife was taken possession of by his elder brother. This was not only an act of

brutal tyranny upon his younger brother and his wife, but an unpardonable act of impiety and devilry from the Aryan viewpoint.

Though Bali was known to be incomparably superior to Sugriva in point of prowess and resources and could reasonably be expected to be much more helpful to him in the attainment of his object, Rama could not persuade himself to enter into any friendly alliance with an unscrupulous tyrant and a wanton transgressor of moral laws. He took the side of the oppressed and depressed party, killed the tyrant in his own fort as an outlaw, restored to Sugriva his lawful wife and property, brought about an honourable reconciliation between Sugriva and Bali's pious son and heir, Angada, and united the entire *Banara* race under their leadership. The men and women of this race and the allied tribes soon became devoted admirers of Rama and Lakshmana and the culture they represented. Though not much advanced in intellectual culture and military power, they were soon organised by the superhuman genius of Rama and Lakshmana into a strong and disciplined army capable of facing the universally feared forces of the most powerful Rakshasa emperor. There were among them some individuals of exceptional abilities, whose presence in such a race was beyond expectation. The Divine inspiration and the organising genius of Rama and Lakshmana roused and activated their sleeping powers and enabled them to work wonders. They discovered the culprit, who was a dread to gods and men alike, and detected how Sita was kept in Lanka and how the Aryan lady maintained her chastity and purity by defying all the machinations of Ravana to win her over. Within an incredibly short

period they constructed a stone-bridge with wonderful engineering skill across the strait separating Lanka from the mainland, invaded the most powerfully fortified capital of the greatest imperialist despot of the time, killed all the illustrious generals whose names would have struck terror into the hearts of the other fighting races of India and at length killed Ravana himself. The banner of Aryan culture was with the help of the organised non-Aryans hoisted aloft in the very centre of non-Aryan materialistic and militaristic civilization.

## VII

### The Banner of Aryan culture hoisted in the centre of non-Aryan civilization

Ravana's pious brother, Bibhisana, was the noblest type of non-Aryan culture. After having revolted against the militaristic and imperialistic outlook of his elder brother and the Rakshasa statesmen in general, he made friends with Ramachandra and became an earnest and sincere votary of Aryan culture. He was placed on the throne of Lanka and willingly became the Agent-General of Rama for aryanising the Rakshasas and all the other allied and subdued non-Aryan races. With the downfall of Ravana the Aryan culture was finally triumphant in the south and there remained no serious and formidable resistance in the way of the building up of a great *Akhanda Hindusthan* with its imperishable moral and spiritual ideals.

It is traditionally believed that the *Banaras* under Rama and the Rakshasas under Ravana were engaged in actual fighting during the first nine days of the bright half of the lunar month of *Aswina*. The final victory of the former was proclaimed on the tenth day, when the Banara soldiers under the leadership of Sugriva,

Angada and Hanuman and the Rakshasa citizens under the leadership of Bibhisana joined hands and embraced one another in cordial friendship. They celebrated the victory and the consequent union of the Aryans and the non-Aryans with great religious ardour and enthusiasm. From that day onward this great triumph of Aryan culture in Southern India and this birth of the united Indian nation has, it is believed, have been commemorated year after year by all the admirers of Aryan culture and the votaries of Indian cultural and spiritual unity.

## VIII

### Ravana and Rama as representatives of the two cultures

The victory of Rama over Ravana is rightly regarded as the most appropriate symbol for the triumph of Aryanism over non-Aryanism. Ravana represents non-Aryanism at its highest. He performed great *tapasya* and passed through various modes of self-discipline for the attainment of physical immortality in this mortal world and for the establishment of sovereignty on land, sea and air. He developed his powers to a super-human degree and directed them to the conquest of men and nature. He attained wonderful mastery over the forces of nature and compelled the nature-gods to be at his beck and call. He organised a military power, which was regarded by friends and foes alike as invincible and all-conquering. He became a great empire-builder and a so-called world-conqueror. His civilization was based on the militarisation of human energy, which set at naught the Divine power and its spiritual government on earth. Morality and religion, justice and benevolence, sense of discipline and social etiquette, etc., were all cultured, good, con-

venient and effective factors in the development of political and economic powers. Materialistic ambition occupied the central position in individual and collective life. This is really a revolt against the Spiritual Ideal immanent in the plan of the universe.

In spite of all the dazzling achievements of human power in this materialistic and militaristic civilization, the seed of its destruction is inherent in its very nature. The moral and spiritual Power operating behind the scene in the universe and ultimately determining the destinies of the human race asserts Itself against this scheme of militarisation or *rakshasisation* of the noble human energy, and the more gorgeous the apparent progress of this scheme, the nearer does it approach its inevitable doom. This was the case with Ravana's civilization and many other materialistic civilizations before and after him.

Rama represented Aryan culture at its best. He was a born hero and a military genius like Ravana, but his heroism did not manifest itself in self-aggrandisement or in the gratification of any materialistic ambition. His heroism lay in the fearless and dauntless devotion to the eternal, moral and spiritual ideals of human life. No hardship, no sacrifice, no risk, no resistance could deter him from the path of moral and spiritual duty. The exhibitions of his military powers, his organising abilities, his capacities for administration, his skill in diplomacy, were all for the realisation of the moral and spiritual ideals in individual and collective life. What he achieved by means of the hardest possible struggle and the most persevering efforts for the sake of the ideals, he could give up with ease for the sake of ideals, though the sacrifice

might mean the tearing away of his own heart, such as the sacrifice of his most beloved wife and the most beloved brother. It was the moral and spiritual ideals, the core of his life, that determined his domestic, social, political, economic and military duties. It was not physical immortality or political and economic sovereignty over all other people that he sought; but it was the attainment of spiritual immortality and the selfless dedication of all his powers and resources to the realisation of spiritual perfection in this life, that he always kept in view in all the affairs of his worldly life. This is true Aryan culture and Aryan civilization, the message of which it was his divinely appointed mission to carry to the fortified centres of materialistic civilisation in the south.

Rama's victory (*vijaya*) over Ravana is year after year commemorated in India as the victory of Spirit over Matter, the victory of Goodness over Greatness, the victory of Love over Hatred, the victory of Truth over Diplomacy, the victory of Self-sacrifice over Self-aggrandisement, the victory of the Man of the people over the Lord of the empire, the victory of the oppressed and plundered masses over the oppressing and plundering tyrant. The memory of this victory brings hope and joy to the hearts of the poorest and the most depressed. It humbles the proud hearts of the rich, the strong and the learned, and inspires them to open their breast and to stretch out their arms with deep feelings of love and brotherliness and with a sense of equality and unity for embracing the poor and the weak and the illiterate. A dynamic consciousness of unity and fraternity is awakened in all, at least for the time being.

## IX

**The Victory of Rama is the Victory  
of the Mother Divine**

The *Sakta Puranas* have added another splendid spiritual conception to this victory. They proclaim that the ultimate Source of all human powers, individual, social or national, is the Supreme Spiritual Power immanent in the universe,—the *Mahasakti*. So long as Rama made efforts to conquer the Rakshasas by dint of his own resources and forces, he was not able to attain final victory. He then worshipped the *Mahasakti*, surrendered all his egoism to the Divine Mother and Self of the universe and realised himself as a mere instrument in the hand of the Mother and as engaged by Her in the performance of Her work in the world. The Mother of the universe revealed Herself to him and pervaded his consciousness. The

favours which She had so long bestowed upon the Rakshasa emperor and which had raised him to the height of his materialistic glory were then withdrawn. The time was ripe for the emancipation of India from the non-Aryan materialism and militarism. It is really the Mother,—the Soul of India,—that fought within Rama and brought about the destruction of Ravana. The victory of Rama over Ravana accordingly signifies to the Hindu mind the self-revelation of the Divine Mother with Her spiritual glories unveiled before the human society and the reconstruction by Her own hands of the order of human civilization on the eternal spiritual basis. It is this consciousness which the *Vijaya* festival is intended to rouse year after year in the hearts of all the children of the Divine Mother.

**OUR ATTITUDE TO WAR AND HUMAN SUFFERINGS**

*By Sister Savitri*

यस्मिन् यर्वाणि भूतानि आमैवाभृद् विजानतः ।  
तत्र को मोहः कः शोकं एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

(*Isha Upanishad*)

Nothing is more puzzling now-a-days than the great conflict arising in our minds, in front of the disheartening calamity which under a guise or another, fast spreading in the whole world and soon bordering our doorsteps, might any moment ravage our hearth and home.

We know that in reality we are one. We have been taught this by the scriptures and by our Masters. We know that it is a truth that can be realized fully, even beyond human understanding, as did the Seers of old, the saints and sages of today, as did

Sri Ramakrishna, the living example of a Truth-Realized Soul.

Yet, unable to bear the sight of the child's tearful eyes, her shrunken body pale with hunger, the pitiable look of the mother helplessly praying for a miracle or an unexpected boon from the Almighty in the shape of some eatables; hearing the heart-rending screams of the home-wrenched ones and feeling the unceasing grabbing horror of war menacingly threatening those dear to us; we turn in dismay towards the Divine Ordainer of things. We cannot gauge the depth of His Will. We understand it to be His own sweet whims; yet, why this intense suffering? Why those cries, those tears, that unending agony?

The Vedantist says : 'All is but a dream. Know these sufferings and joys to be equally untrue. There is but One Consciousness pervading in and through all things.' The humanitarian point of view argues : 'Who but a stone indeed could remain untouched and unmoved by such worldly catastrophe and pretend this to be an illusion ?' Indeed, we must admit both views to be correct. Theory is always right, but practice is greatly different.

It is true that being the delusive construction of the Infinite Creative Mind, this world appears endowed to our minds with so many defects and qualities of its own, and shines thus more like a materialised dream. And it is also true that no being whosoever can remain unmoved at the face of such affliction and does not feel himself the experiences which others are undergoing by the millions daily.

Where is the way out of this conflict ? How should we fashion our mind so that we could act without a contradictory friction constantly taking place in each of our thoughts and actions ?

Philosophy is no more than our personal treasure. And applied Vedanta means perfect unattachment to worldly feelings, true discrimination of the Real from the unreal and experience of the Eternal Oneness from within the Inner Self. But it means also service to each and every creature as a part and parcel of this Oneness. To act accordingly is to feel for others and not for one's self, to feel without attachment in fulfilling our duty according to our conscience and constantly visualizing the underlying Reality within all this bewitching play.

We shall fashion our mind at one angle when it concerns our own sake,

our heart and mind and at another when it concerns the feelings of others.

Let us enjoy for our spiritual sake, the great diversion of the manifested Infinite, of the Mother Divine, of Nataraja in His wild destructive dance. How beautiful was the day of creation, the day when the One said : 'I wish to be many', of the play of smiles and tears, of colours and forms, of time and joy. And how beautiful now, the days of destruction. As the fish dies for water, having seen the beginning, we long for the end. The cloud that came has passed. All that has come shall go. We long now to witness but the shadow of the play and to live once more in the Eternal Reality. To throw our being back into the Ocean of Light that lies beyond the differentiation of change and time, from which nothing can be separate, nothing can be different, where all appearances vane away and melt at the approach of the Sun of Self-Realization. At last the days have come when, with loud and joyous laughter, the Divine Animator shall break the giant monument. Intoxicated with the spirit of the Eternal Truth, He dances the Oneness Infinite with wildly shaking steps that dispel the dream of the 'many'. Thus let our minds rejoice at the divine sport, the dance of the ununderstandable Illusionist, the beloved Artist of our hearts.

And now, in front of the distressed humanity encircling us, let us adopt such attitude as can bring our hearts to feel their pain and sufferings as our very own and compel us to serve them at the cost of our needs and lives, just as to our own kith and kin, nay to our very selves.

Let us not worry at the thought of misfortune entering our house. Let the worse even happen despite our

greatest care and attention. When it comes, let us see the blissful dance of the Lord of creation and destruction having blessed our dwellings with His hallowed footsteps. And to our

neighbour in pangs of worse torments, let us, with a heart full of compassion, humbly devote ourselves to the service of those living Gods, those children of Bliss in so many garbs.

## IMMORTALITY

*By G. R. Malkani, M.A..*

Immortality is not the same thing as survival. If we survived but remained at our present level of experience, or if we merely continued to pass through the vicissitudes of alternating birth and death, what would be gained? It might even be better that the individual should cease to exist, and the whole or the social organism, which somehow conserves the values created by the individual in their life-time, should be immortal. Individual immortality would only gain in meaning if the survival of the individual were accompanied by a higher experience or by a state of transcendent being which did not entail further birth and death.

In a sense individual immortality is a misnomer. There are philosophers who hold that our individuality is at the root of all our troubles, and that all our individual existence as such is painful. The blind will to persistence is only effectively checked when we can shed our individuality. True immortality would then be a higher form of existence in which the individual had ceased to be individual and become the whole or the Absolute.

How do we conceive this higher form of existence? Most of us would conceive of it as a higher form of life or of experience. But can there be an absolute experience? We can form no clear or exact idea. The best

of our experiences, which can supply an analogy, can always be excelled both in quality and in intensity. They can be excelled in freshness, subtlety, inwardness and joyousness. There is no limit to the excellence of an experience. Possibly there is such a limit. What is called in Vedanta *Brahmakaravritti* is such an experience. Now we can understand that our intelligence or *buddhi* can take the subtlest of forms appropriate to the kind of reality which comes ever so dimly within its apprehension. It goes everywhere. Nothing is entirely inaccessible to it. But we shall greatly misapprehend the nature of this experience if we compare it to any other experience. Every other experience moves in the region of some objective content. Brahman is not such a content. To have an experience of Brahman then, our intelligence or *buddhi* must lose its foothold in the world and its normal function. This function is to apprehend something that is *other* to it. In apprehending it, it gives it a form. It makes or constructs what it apprehends. In the case of Brahman however, the function of reality and that of our *buddhi* is reversed. The latter does not give form to the former. It does not objectify. It gets itself lost or resolved into reality. *Buddhi* takes on the form of Brahman

and becomes Brahman. The natural dualism of our knowledge is here lost. It is not an experience in the ordinary sense. And we must suppose that when this experience arises, it ceases to be an experience at the very next moment. We cannot say whether it is reality or experience. Can we keep it 'an experience' and yet be timeless? We think this is not possible.

We shall go further. All experience is evanescent. Instability is the very character of all our knowledge. An idea however fixed is still an idea. It must pass. No experience as an experience can be timeless. It must have a lapse or an end. It leads necessarily to negation or death. How can we picture immortality as an experience, however exalted? In fact, we cannot even desire to be consciously aware for ever and ever. If self-conscious being has a value, the opposite of it also has a value for us. We like to forget ourselves and escape from our littleness. Sleep is welcome in our present state of being, but it would always be welcome as an escape from self-consciousness; and all experience involves this self-consciousness. We conclude that experience as such cannot be our goal. All so-called life has the elements of death in it, only because it naturally passes into death, but also because such passage would be desired by us as a value.

True immortality is not a species of life, but non-empirical and non-temporal existence. Whether we partake of this existence is a different matter. But if we do, and if we are on that account immortal, all that is needed is that we should *know* this. There is nothing apart from knowledge which can make us immortal in our sense of the term. For either we have timeless and eternal being or we

have not. In the former case, our loss can only be due to our ignorance, the removal of which through knowledge should gain for us our immortality. In the latter case, nothing that we could do would achieve for us our immortal being. The knowledge however which is our only means here has a peculiar character. We should not merely know our individual self to be timeless and changeless, if that were possible. If we are individually of that nature, the sense of values is frustrated. There is no such thing as private immortality. If we are immortal—but the process of time stands outside of us as a real process—we cannot avoid the sense of limitation; if not also that of interference. We shall only appear to ourselves, in contrast to this other reality, devoid or emptied of all content and so of all value. This deficiency is only made good when all things are seen to partake of my immortality. In other words, we should know that the temporal process is not another domain of being opposed to us, but that it is a domain of illusory appearance which is grounded in the self which is eternal. All temporal values will then cease to represent any real value; for there can be no real value attaching to what is illusory and non-existent. The knowledge of our own immortality thus becomes a problem not merely of seeing ourselves to be out of time, but of seeing all things in time 'under the image of eternity.'

We see all things in time. We see them either as occurring or as enduring or as having a position in a time-series. If we are to perceive them under the image of eternity, we must perceive them in none of these ways. But then can we perceive them at all? It can be argued that we can still perceive things as enduring or even

as having a position in time or as being 'now'. These different ways of perceiving them to be in time does not necessarily make them temporal. What we perceive to be *enduring* or *s now* may be in itself timeless. The temporal form is ours. It is not immanent in what is perceived. We may thus perceive something to be in time, and yet it may be out of time.

We do not agree with this view. There is a sense in which time simply cannot be excluded from the nature of that which is perceived. Our perception is an act. When we perceive, we discriminate and determine. We are thinkingly active in every piece of knowledge, however direct. If that is so, what I perceive is part of the act or process of perception. It is a construct. But then time cannot be denied to have a part in it. What I perceive is as I perceive it or as I think it. Our thought is shot through and through with will. It *makes* what it knows. Can we argue that time has no part in the objects of our ordinary perception?

To perceive anything under the image of eternity, we must perceive it in a different way. Let us suppose that we must perceive it either as itself a substance or as a mode or substance. We define substance as what is not caused to exist, or what is self-caused and self-existing. Further, a substance must have a standing or unchanging being. Temporality would be essentially opposed to it. An act or an event cannot therefore be called a substance. This is also how the word 'substance' is generally understood. It is a very uncommon usage of the word when we make it stand for a sneeze or the battle of Waterloo as McTaggart does. We must distinguish between a substance and an event.

Can we perceive anything to be substance or a mode of substance? It may be argued that whenever we do so, we subjectively supply this concept of substance and determine through it what we perceive. Nothing is a substance in itself and without subjective determination. We do not agree with this view propounded by Kant. All our empirical knowledge may be determined by the categories of substance, causality, etc. But we cannot foreclose the possibility of non-empirical knowledge. We think this knowledge possible. Indeed, we cannot eschew thought and talk significantly about anything. But thought might feel itself compelled to negate itself. If thought is face to face with a reality which cannot be grasped in any idea, and for which there is no adequate expression whatsoever, must not thought recognise its own failure instead of rejecting the truth? It all depends upon what thought is obliged to recognise. We contend that when the higher reality is known, thought finds itself liquidated or finds itself as an appearance or an appendage of reality. If such knowledge is not possible, timeless reality cannot be known, and the question of our own immortality becomes illusory. We do not think that this is so.

Things cannot be known as substances or as modes of substances in our ordinary perception, which, as we have already said, *makes* the objects which it knows. It must be a different kind of seeing in which the substance as such can be apprehended. We may suppose that all perceived objects are modes of one substance which is beyond perception, or which is an object of an intellectual intuition. By this we may understand a certain *a priori* necessity of thought

which thought recognises. When we say that A is a substance, B is a substance, etc. we *mean* that A, B, etc. are modes of one substance which is distinct from A, B, etc.; since the latter pass and cease to be the substances they are. True substance, by definition, must not pass. It is changeless. In this way we may be said to apprehend intellectually one substance in all substances. But evidently there is *supposition* in all such knowledge. It is not properly speaking *intuition*. A supposition can be questioned. True intuition cannot be questioned.

It might now be argued that there is not one substance, but many substances. Wherever we have a temporal series, the temporal relation is illusory but the series is not illusory. We shall suppose that reality is a series of terms which are non-temporally related. A logical relation will be a non-temporal relation. But can we have a real series when we have rejected the reality of time? A series has got to be imagined or thought or constructed in order to be realised a series; and this involves the reality of time. Again, a logical series as little explains the perceptual error of seeing it as a temporal series as would a reality which is not a series. We gain nothing by way of explanation by postulating that reality is non-temporal but that it is nevertheless a series. In fact, it is wholly inexplicable how things which are timeless and non-temporally related should appear to us to come into being and pass out of being. If this appearance is due to the error of our perception, then this perception not only creates the illusion of time, but also the illusion of terms which are in time; for the terms are not already there, and then misperceived to be in time. The

illusion embraces the relation together with the terms. Finally it will be noted that a logical relation still demands the reality of time. For there is no logical relation if there is no *movement* from the premises to the conclusion. The conclusion needs to be drawn. It is only when reality involves no movement of any sort that it can be timeless. But then neither many substances can be proved nor any kind of relation. A timeless reality is bound to be a one-substance reality.

How can we know this one substance and things as modes of this substance? There is only one way. Our experience of time must at the same time reveal the timeless. The timeless is not a separate or an independant reality. It is 'given' *together with* the appearance of time and makes this appearance possible. The illusory appearance such as that of the snake is never given apart from the reality, namely the rope. The two are simultaneously given in one and the same experience. Further, all that we have got to do to know the timeless is to analyse this experience. The reality is already there before us. We simply do not attend to it, and we say that we do not know it. As a matter of fact we always know it. It is part of our intuition of time. We only do not recognise it. This recognition is brought about through analysis and interpretation. No separate act of knowledge is needed to know the timeless. It is like knowing what is already perfectly known. There is no new intuition. This reality which is the ground of all temporal appearance is no other than pure consciousness or our true self.

We said that we must perceive all things under the image or eternity. But is there any relation between the

temporal and the timeless? If there is no real relation, what do we mean by 'perceiving under' the image of eternity? We contend that we cannot see the things in time and *also* the self which is timeless. If we see the illusory, we cannot know the real, and *vice versa*. In order therefore to see things under the image of eternity, we must see the eternal and not the things. There is no real relation between the two. The only relation between them is one of false identity, the relation which subsists between

every illusory appearance and the reality of which it is an appearance. Our view is that we must turn from the temporal appearance in order to see the timeless self. And when we have seen the self, the temporal appearance will be wholly annulled and forgotten; and if it is not quite forgotten it will at least appear to us as hollow, unreal and without value. This kind of knowledge has the quality of immortality; for although immortality is our natural possession, we only gain it through knowledge.

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

About doctrines and so forth I have to say only this that if anyone accepts Paramahamsa Deva as Avatar etc., it is all right; if he doesn't do so, it is just the same. The truth about it is that in point of character, Paramahamsa Deva beats all previous record, and as regards teaching he was more liberal, more original and more progressive than all his predecessors. In other words, the older Teachers were rather one-sided, while the teaching of this new Incarnation or Teacher is that the best point of yoga, devotion, knowledge and work must be combined now so as to form a new society. ....The older ones were no doubt good, but this is the new religion of this age,—the synthesis of Yoga, knowledge, devotion and work—the propagation of knowledge and Devotion to all, down to the very lowest, without distinction of age or sex. The previous Incarnations were all right, but they have been synthesised in the person of Ramakrishna. For the ordinary man and the beginner steady devotion (*Nishtha*) to an ideal is of paramount importance. That is to

say, teach them that all great personalities should be duly honoured, but homage should be paid now to Ramakrishna. There can be no vigour without steady devotion. Without it one cannot preach with the intensity of a Mahavira (Hanuman). Besides, the previous ones have become rather old. Now we have a new India, with its new God, new religion and new Vedas. When, O Lord, shall our land be free from this eternal dwelling upon the past? Well, a little bigotry also is a necessity. But we must harbour no antagonistic feelings towards others.

My friends, many have no doubt served the Master, but whenever anyone would be disposed to consider himself an extraordinary personage, he should think that although he has associated with Sri Ramakrishna, he has seen only the trash that was uppermost in his mind! Were it not so, he would manifest the results. The Master himself used to quote, "They would sing and dance in the name of the Lord but come to grief in the end." The root of that degeneration is egotism—to think that one is just

as great as any other. Indeed ! "He used to love me too!"—one would plead. Alas, Nick Bottom, would you then be thus translated? Would such a man envy or quarrel with another and degrade himself? Bear in mind that through His grace lots of men will be turned out with the nobility of gods—aye, wherever His mercy would drop.

I read in the organ of the social reformers that I am called a Sudra, and am challenged as to what right a Sudra has to become a Sannyasin. To which I reply—I trace my descent to one at whose feet every Brahman lays flowers when he utters the words—*Yamaya Dharmarajaya Chitraguptaya vai namah*—and whose descendants are the purest of Kshatriyas. If you believe in your mythology, or your Pauranika scriptures, let these so-called reformers know that my caste, apart from other services in the past, ruled half of India for centuries. If my caste is left out of consideration, what will there be left of the present-day civilisation of India? In Bengal alone, my blood has furnished them with their greatest philosopher, the greatest poet, the greatest historian, the greatest archaeologist, the greatest religious preachers; my blood has furnished India with the greatest of her modern scientists. These detractors ought to have known a little of our own history, and to have studied our three castes, and learnt that the Brahman, the Kshatriya, and the Vaisya have equal right to be Sannyasins; the Traivarnika have equal rights to the Vedas. This is only by the way. I have just quoted this, but I am not at all hurt if they call me a Sudra. It will be a little reparation for the tyranny of my ancestors over the poor. If I am a Pariah I will be all the more glad, for

I am the disciple of a man, who—the Brahman of Brahmans—wanted to cleanse the house of a Pariah. Of course the Pariah would not allow him; how could he let this Brahman Sannyasin come and cleanse his house! And this man woke up in the dead of night, entered surreptitiously the house of this Pariah, cleansed his latrine, and with his long hair wiped the place, saying, "Oh my Mother, make me the servant of the Pariah, make me feel that I am even lower than the Pariah". And that he did day after day in order that he might make himself the servant of all. I bear the feet of that man on my head; he is my hero; that hero's life I will try to imitate. By being the servant of all a Hindu seeks to uplift himself; that is how the Hindus should uplift the masses, and not by looking to any foreign influence. Twenty years of occidental civilisation brings to my mind the illustration of the man who wants to starve his own friend in a foreign land, simply because this friend is popular, simply because he thinks that this man stands in the way of his making money. And the other is the illustration of what genuine, orthodox Hinduism itself will do at home. Let anyone of our reformers bring out that life, ready to serve even a Pariah, and then I will sit at his feet and learn, and not before that. One ounce of practice is worth twenty thousand tons of big talk.

It was given to me to live with a man who was as ardent a dualist, as ardent an Advaitist, as ardent a Bhakta, as a Jnani. And living with this man first put it into my head to understand the Upanishads and the texts of the Scriptures from an independent and better basis than by blindly following the commentators;

and in my opinion, and in my researches I came to the conclusion that these texts are not at all contradictory. So we need have no fear of text-torturing at all !..... Therefore I now find in the light of this man's life that the Dualist and the Advaitist need not fight each other ; each has a place, and a great place in the national life ; the Dualist must remain, for he is as much part and parcel of the national religious life as the Advaitist ; one cannot exist without the other ; one is the fulfilment of the other ; one is the building, the other is the top ; the one the root, the other the fruit and so on. Therefore any attempt to torture the texts of the Upanishads appears to me very ridiculous.

The time was ripe for one to be born, who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Sankara and the wonderfully expansive, infinite heart of Chaitanya ; one who would see in every sect the same spirit working, the same God ; one who would see God in every being, one whose heart would weep for the poor, for the weak, for the outcast, for the down-trodden, for every one in this world, inside India or outside India ; and at the same time whose grand brilliant intellect would conceive of such noble thoughts as would harmonise all conflicting sects, not only in India, but outside of India, and bring a marvellous harmony, the universal religion of head and heart into existence ; such a man was born, and I had the good fortune to sit at his feet

for years. The time was ripe, it was necessary that such a man should be born, and he came ; and the most wonderful part of it was, that his life's work was just near a city which was full of Western thought, a city which had run mad after these occidental ideas, a city which had become more Europeanised than any other city in India. There he lived, without any book-learning whatsoever ; this great intellect never learnt even to write his own name, but the most brilliant graduates of our university found in him an intellectual giant. He was a strange man, this Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.....the great Sri Ramakrishna, the fulfilment of the Indian sages, the sage for the time, one whose teaching is just now, in the present time, most beneficial. And mark the Divine power working behind the man. The son of a poor priest, born in an out-of-the-way village, unknown and unthought of, to-day is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more. Who knows the plans of the Lord ! Now, my brothers, if you do not see the hand, the finger of Providence, it is because you are blind, born blind indeed.....If I have told you one word of truth it was his and his alone, and if I have told you many things which were not true, which were not correct, which were not beneficial to the human race, they were all mine, and on me is the responsibility.

## MODERN SCIENCE AND VEDANTA

By Swami Adidevananda.

Glancing over the recent past we find that Science has made great advances in all departments of knowledge. Studying external Nature physics has familiarised us with the concepts of spiral nebulae and a single space-time continuum. Scrutinizing the structure of 'matter' it has made known the quantum theory, nature of radioactive substances and the structure of atoms. These and other similar new items of scientific knowledge has begun to affect profoundly some of our fundamental conceptions. It may be permitted to mention that the effect of these new concepts upon orthodox philosophical tenets has been disastrous. Descartes and Spinoza, Kant and Hegel can no more claim sole intellectual allegiance from thoughtful people. It is an age of intellectual confusion, with the prospect of a broader and clearer horizon.

It seems natural under the circumstances that there is among some modern philosophers a readiness to adapt themselves to the new intellectual atmosphere; for they cannot fail to note that the edifice of old philosophy is collapsing without the support of science. So in the light of the new discoveries of science, they endeavour to subsume under the term philosophy notions which it did not originally convey. Unfortunately this attempt does not hold much promise. Perhaps time will bring forth another Copernican revolution in which science may show a different picture of the universe other than that today. Then people will again clamour for a new philosophy which is based on the fresh materials then unearthed by science.

This philosophy-making process may go on *ad infinitum*. Thus it seems this philosophical approach to Truth will land us in uncertainty and constant shifting if we follow science thoughtlessly. Between the position of shifting philosophy and stagnant orthodox doctrines, Vedanta comes to our rescue.

What is the special claims of Vedanta over the discoveries of New science and conclusions of the old philosophies? J. Arthur Thompson defines science as 'the complete and consistent description of the facts of experience in the simplest possible term.'

While science acquires, describes and analyses facts of experience with a view to find out the uniformity of behaviour, philosophy attempts to reflect upon the universe as a whole, particularly as to its purpose and value. 'The function of science is to answer the question "what?" writes Prof. W. T. Stace, 'but never the question "why?"'. In other words, its function is simply to describe phenomena, never to explain them. There emerges from what has been said that on this premise the conception of reality arrived at will be no more than a construct of our mind. This cannot be otherwise, since objects are known to us only through our senses and are perceived only by our minds. The attempts of science and philosophy are doomed to sterility in the ultimate explanation of reality, as they have no extra-sensory means of attaining knowledge.

When science fails to give an unified understanding of the universe,

Vedanta comes forward and secures a perfect unity between the individual and the universe by introducing a direct relation. The purpose of Vedanta is peace, unity and salvation. It is based on a profound intuitive (immediate insight without reasoning) feeling of the highest value. It is the Divinity within man uniting to the Divinity beyond. It takes us up into the Himalayan-top and throws shafts of revealing light upon many a dark corner.

There are two pictures of the universe—the old universe of common sense and a new universe of science. One has an apparent reality; the other has a reality acceptable to the scientist. Let us take up the first aspect and see what it reveals. There are solid objects around us with weight, shape and colour. The cycle of seasons revolves in regular succession ; and day after day we see the sun rising in the east and setting in the west. We receive various sensations according to the nature of the objects; some of them pleasant and others unpleasant. In this aspect we have no fusion of space and time in one unitary concept.

Now let us consider the aspect of universe as revealed by new science. It was discovered that, underlying the solid world as we see it in ordinary life, there was another world revealed through telescope, microscope and other instruments. There are only two ultimate substances, namely, positive and negative electricity. Each of these consists of a number of minute particles similar in nature ; the positive particle is called proton, the negative the electron. The results of profound and intricate researches show that Space and Time are more closely related to each other than we imagine. There is no space with three

dimensions and Time with one, but Space-Time with four dimensions.

Time was when people thought that scientists had given the final solution for all their problems. But a critical student of Vedanta does not stop until he intuits the Reality which is something absolute and ultimate. The oldest of philosophical problems still remains unanswered. What is Reality ? What, after all, is an electron ?

A scientist may brand the world of common sense as mere illusion, and similarly an old-fashioned philosopher may describe the world of science as objectionable nonsense. It is difficult to say which Reality is ultimate and 'the thing in itself.' Why should the world of ordinary experience be regarded as unreal even if the solid objects are composed of electrons and protons ? Why should the electron be regarded as real when the scientist cannot explain its behaviour ? If a child swallows a coin, it is not possible for us to see it with our own eyes how the coin is stuck up in the stomach ; the stomach-wall is an actual barrier between our retinæ and the coin. But X-Rays can penetrate the stomach as if there is no barrier. What is not impervious to X-Rays is solid to human eyes. Similarly what are illusions and hallucinations to some are realities for others. If there is only one correct means for knowing the things, why this mutual contradiction ?

It is possible for Vedanta, which is based on the eternal values, to 'solve this mystery of man and the universe. The pictures of the universe as revealed by Physics, Psychics and ordinary life touch only a fringe of the Reality. Each of them presents a reality within its own limitation. Vedantic intuition, which is beyond the framework

of the human mind confers upon these aspects a kind of relative reality. To Vedantins even the space-time continuum is within the great nescience. As long as we think within the capacity of human mind we have to grasp only those aspects which are within space and time. As soon as we transcend the limitations of our mind, the picture of our naive common sense as well as the picture of science become mere phantoms.

No theory of physical and chemical sciences helps us in solving the vexed problem of life and death. A physiologist cannot see anything more than a colloidal compound which, to him, represents a chemical basis of life. (Sic! if they know the chemical composition of a dead cell why do they not resurrect it?) Biology describes how a simple fertilised germ cell divides and proliferates. But Embryology fails to answer what force in the cell makes them divide and develop. It is true that the Absolute of Vedanta is incomprehensible to the human mind. But the Vedantic intuition as understood from the Pisgah-heights of highest wisdom explains many mysteries of our existence. Vedantic thinkers find it an utter absurdity to explain life on mechanical basis. How can the causality based on the configuration of physical and chemical substances account for the organic development? The Absolute of Vedanta is the Intelligence and Creative Power of the universe. It is the *elan*, subtler than the subtlest, and enters into everything as the evolutionary urge. Rightly an Upanishadic text declares; 'He desired, may I be many, may I grow forth.....Having sent forth he entered it. Having entered it he became Sat and Tat, defined and undefined, supported and non-supported, knowledge and non-knowledge,

real and unreal.' Sir Arthur Thompson says that 'it is difficult to think of the germ-cell, of higher animal at least, as being without its psychical aspect. Unless we think of "the mind" as entering in at a later stage in development, the germ cell must have a dim primordium of a subjective, the promise and potency of mentality.' In the ultimate analysis of Vedanta there is no Reality of mind and matter. Everything is the expression of one indivisible Reality.

As science is materialistic whose purpose is pure theory subordinated to economic end, any philosophy based upon that is bound to be materialistic. What is wanted is not a reconstruction of science, but a progress of it, a progress not in the form of mere acquisition of facts or formulation of laws, but in the form of a comprehension of the eternal values. For now, as in the past, man wants to know Reality. Centuries ago before Christ the Vedantic seers realised the Truth underlying all the apparent manifestations of mind and matter.

Another point of interest is that many scientists headed by Einstein and Max Planck are unwilling to accept the philosophy of indeterminism. In their world every event is determined by a causal succession of previous events. All phenomena are subjected to the law of causality. Man becomes absolutely powerless like a cog in the wheel, as all his actions are predetermined by the prior causes. This law has been challenged by many scientists (Eddington and Neils Bohr) who have propounded a 'principle of indeterminism' and hold that chance reigns in nature. In Vedanta free-will is not an illusion, but on the contrary, a necessary postulate for all human actions. Man is the architect

of his own destiny; he is subject to causality in so far as he is determined by the consequence of his own actions. It is no wonder that man has creative freedom in the Vedantic scheme as the ultimate goal of his life is the manifestation of Divinity within.

Vedanta is the eternal goal of realised Truth. The votaries of science also are seeking to understand Truth though their attention is riveted for the time being on the minutiae of the immediate frontiers of their endeavour. Though the method of science remains a theory, the day is surely

not far off when the scientists may take a plunge in the unchartered seas of intuitional realisation. As Emerson puts it, 'Under every deep, a lower deep opens.' The gulf between science and philosophy can only be bridged when both of them enable man to participate in the eternal through the knowledge of the Spirit. Thus, the acquiring of Vedantic knowledge becomes the ultimate philosophic endeavour to which all other aims of man are merely subsidiary, and the paramount value to which all other values are subordinated.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE GESTURE LANGUAGE OF THE HINDU DANCE:** BY MADAME LA MERI, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS. PRICE \$ 10. PP. 100.

The divine art of Natya, which has its origin in the Vedas, later fell into disrepute, because of its association with the "Devadasis." But in recent times, due to the endeavours of an enlightened aristocracy, it has been restored to a place of dignity. But the Indian artistic renaissance served only for the appreciation of the classical theories, and any modification in the old traditional ways was not looked upon with favour. At this stage of the history of the art there arose some critics, who in their enthusiastic provincial or territorial leanings, extolled a particular school of Natya as purely classical and condemned the others as revolutionary. Such controversial writings besides retarding the progress of a new school that was taking shape, never gave a fair account of the different schools of the common art in their restricted variations.

This book by Madame La Meri has an inestimable value in the respect of looking at the art and its evolution from an all-India point of view, divorced from clanish or territorial prejudices. The short but erudite descriptions of Kathakali, Sadir Nautch, Kathak and various other schools, are fair, and prepare the ground for the introduction of the "new dance of India", which has had a very charitable treatment at the hands of the authoress. Tributes are paid to the modifications, which have been considered as improvements to fit in with the changing times and environments.

Beginning with the origin and history of the art and emphasising the religious background that "dance cannot exist without religion, and its primary aim is to evoke in the spectator the fountain of *rasa*, enjoyment of which has been compared to Brahmananda", the book is indispensable for all students of culture. Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy writes the foreword and Prof. Henry Zimmer the introduction. At the end is a glossary.

A characteristic and new feature of the book is the splendid get-up and the publication of 200 hand poses and full size photographs, which themselves show the intensity of feeling that can be expressed by gesture.

Unique in illustration, fair and exhaustive in description and wealthy in information, the volume is a monumental addition to the Indian culture in general and the art of dance in particular.

— Viswanathan.

**PARAMARTHA CHINTAMANI :** (KANNADA) BY Y. SUBBA RAO. PAGES : 24 + 272. PRICE : RS. 2-12. PUBLISHERS : ADHYATMA PRAKASA KARYALAYA, HOLENARSIPUR, MYSORE STATE.

The most recurrent question among thousands of those which arise in the human mind is, 'What is the Reality in this Universe of multifarious phenomena?' It is a firm determination of the Upanishadic Seers that the Reality is One and undivided, the inexpressible and unfathomable Consciousness which is indicated by the term *Brahman*. The ideal of humanity must be the manifestation of this innate divinity, *Brahman*. To express it differently, it is knowing one's Self as identical with *Brahman*. The supreme objective of human life or *Paramartha* ought to be realization of *Brahman*. The present book is a treatise on this *Paramartha* or the highest truth.

The method adopted here for determination of the Reality of the Universe is the one based on 'Reason or *Vicharadrishti*.' A noteworthy feature of this method, as applied here, is that though the fountain of arguments springs up from the Upanishadic source yet the course it has taken in the form of avoidance of many scriptural quotations and independent presentation of thoughts is in such a manner as to appeal

impressively to the modern mind. The author's leading the readers through this novel avenue, not only enhances interest in the present volume but arouses zeal for further study also.

The principal points of discussion are: Discovery of the Reality from an analysis of the three states (*avasthatraya*), Necessity for examination of the three states, without any omission, Special features of Avasthatriadic method, Meaning of the terms, *Sat* (Existence), *Chit* (Consciousness), and *Ananda* (Bliss), and Utility of Brahmajnanam in this workaday world.

The following few words may suggest to one's mind the trend of discussion.

The uniqueness of this particular method is due to its encompassing the entire field of experience, and an analysis of which therefore, quite naturally, reveals the uncontradictable Reality. Elucidation of the fact that *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda* are not attributes of *Brahman*, but, from the absolute standpoint, are *Brahman* itself, is very effective and convincing.

*Brahman* is not a matter for mere argumentation, but, essentially one for direct apprehension which is within the reach of any and every qualified person. One will wonder how the hundreds of seemingly uncompromising differences will dissolve in the ocean of ultimate Unity and how then will dawn the effulgent sun in the mental horizon of humanity, if this ideal is kept ablaze in every walk of life—individual, social, educational, political, national and international!

In the end, the author draws readers' attention to the second volume of this treatise wherein very interesting topics are proposed to be

discussed. Topics such as Vedanta and several Eastern and Western Philosophies, Vedanta and the great Religions of the World, and Vedanta and its relation to Physical Sciences, Psychology, Logic, Ethics, etc., which are included in the scheme for this volume are surely well-suited to modern times.

The simple and lucid style has facilitated the easy grasp of the abstruse subject. Indeed, these volumes will be a good addition to the Kannada Philosophical Literature.

As the author's aim is to serve the Reality which is ever-success it is sure that he will succeed in his fresh endeavours.

**ALWAR SAINTS : BY SWAMI SUDDHA-NANDA BHARATI.** PUBLISHERS : ANBU NILAYAM, RAMACHANDRAPURAM, TRICHY DIST. PRICE : WRAPPER RS. 1.8-0. CALICO RS. 2/- PP. xvi 145.

Awakened India demands a virile and ennobling literature to educate her children for fruitful and effective living. Science and art, philosophy and religion, history and sociology, all have their part in this supreme task of calling out the best and noblest in the blossoming youths of today who are to lead the country tomorrow. It is the highest duty of all who are concerned to see that they are not starved for the true and lofty ideals contained in the long and abundantly rich religious tradition of this glorious land enlightened by the lives and examples of Godmen and saints. Spiritual India knows no provincialism, tolerates no communalism, hinders no progressivism. The saints and sages of India are the common property of this entire continent, nay their advent has been for the purpose of inspiring, ennobling, elevating and uniting not only Bharatavarsha but the whole humanity.

Such being the fact it is necessary today to present the cultural and spiritual contributions made by the saints and sages venerated in one part of India to the people living in the other regions. India can be really united and made into a single nation only on spiritual principles. Really speaking we are only to recognize this existing unity and emphasise it. This is done by mutually appreciating the lives of great men born in all parts and even in all religions of India just as those born in one's own province. This is very easy and practical in the case of leaders of religion who were entirely bereft of any pusillanimity. Tulsidas, Surdas, Kabir, Namadev, Tukaram, Rama-krishna, Dayananda and others are household names in Southern India. It is doubtful whether the great lives of Manicka Vasagar, Nammalvar and others are so popularly appreciated in the north. The language barrier has prevented this free flow of spiritual facts and experiences. But it is being overcome by proper attempts.

The book before us is a welcome addition to the spiritual library of modern India. It brings together in simple and inspiring language the lives and message of the Vaishnava Alwars of the south. The Alwars were a galaxy of God-intoxicated divine minstrels through whose message and example a stream of devotion has passed through the heart of south India for over half a millennium. Their influence is still potent in transforming several lives spiritually : for the concrete and abstract cultural forms which they have been directly or indirectly instrumental in creating and sustaining are still alive and active. But unfortunately precious little is known about the details of their life or even their exact period

The antiquarian who considers himself superior to his subject may probably be not able to reconstruct from existing materials a complete and adequate biography of them; but the bare outline contained in tradition and the soul-stirring devotional outpourings which are preserved by a grateful posterity have immortalized them for all time. The present

account in English is an excellent introduction which we recommend to all who have no access to the source books in Tamil. The present author is not an archæologist, but a pilgrim on the divine path; hence its value is high indeed.

We hope the book will be widely circulated in other provinces where little is known about the Alwars.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, MADRAS. REPORT FOR 1941.

This is the fifteenth annual report of the Charitable Dispensary giving a splendid record of service rendered to the indigent sick of the locality during the year 1941. It is remarkable that even during the days of scare and evacuation caused by the war situation the Dispensary continued its active service to the poor who were left behind. During the first year the total number of patients treated in the Allopathic Department was 970 whereas in the year under report the number was 48,329. These numbers speak for themselves. The Homeopathic department started only four years ago is becoming increasingly successful and popular. The total number of cases treated in this department during 1941 was 21,866.

The financial position of the Dispensary is far from satisfactory. It depends mainly on private donations which have thinned considerably due to the general depression. Under the circumstances the Dispensary is threatened with the prospect of limiting its range of service.

The management of the Dispensary takes the opportunity to acknowledge their gratitude to the Doctors and donors and well-wishers for their active help and warm co-operation.

It also appeals to the munificent public to come forward and strengthen the resources of the institution and enable it to continue its much-needed service of our poor unfortunate brethren on a wider scale.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CALCUTTA STUDENTS' HOME. REPORT FOR 1941.

In December last the premises of the Students' Home were requisitioned by the Government for war purposes. The Home was forthwith transferred to a rented house at its present address, P.O. Hasanabad, District 24 Parganas.

At the beginning of the year there were 46 inmates of whom 25 were free, 9 concession-holders and 12 paying. During the year 12 students left the Home and 14 were admitted. Thus at the end of the year there were 48 students on the rolls, 26 being free, 6 part-free and 16 paying.

Three students passed the B. A. examination, one with honours and one with distinction. Fourteen students passed the Intermediate examination and four passed different medical examinations.

The total receipts with balance in all the Funds except the permanent fund came to Rs. 19,225-6-5. The total disbursements was Rs. 17,654-3-9. During the year Rs. 1001-15-3 came to the Permanent Fund.

The authorities render their grateful thanks to one and all of their donors and sympathisers.

**SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION  
VIDYALAYA, COIMBATORE DIST.  
REPORT FOR 1941-42.**

The Vidyalaya is a residential High School run on national lines. There were 112 boys on the rolls during the year under report. Fifteen boys were sent to the S. S. L. C. examination and 12 came out successful.

A very bright feature of the Vidyalaya life is the extra-curricular activities of the students. They take part in excursions, Arts Competition, Rural service, etc. They are also bringing out two magazines, a hand-written one by name *Bala Bharati* and another quarterly named the *Vidyalaya*.

During the year the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on a grand scale. Along with the celebrations a conference of the heads of the South Indian centres of the Mission was also held at the Vidyalaya.

With the object of improving the quality of teachers the Vidyalaya authorities are arranging to open a Secondary Grade Training School for the teachers of the Vidyalaya. It will be known as the Gandhi Training School.

For effective mass education the Vidyalaya has in view the publication of pamphlets and religious tracts in Tamil. Already three such booklets have been brought out, the *Tirukethara Yatrai*, 'Education' by Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna *Arulvakkku*.

The institution is in the process of a healthy and all-round development and has before it great possibilities.

**IN MEMORIUM**

The passing away of Sri Sarat Chandra Chakravarti on Sunday 23rd August '42 at the age of seventy-five

brings sad news to the devotees of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and all who are interested in them. Mr. Chakravarti was a graduate of the University of Calcutta serving in the Postal Department. Early in life he came in contact with Sri Nagamahasya, the great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. From that paragon of humility and divine love he learned about the Master and Swami Vivekananda. Four days after Sri Swamiji's return from the West in 1897 Sri Sarat Chandra met him in Srijut Priyanath Mukherjea's house at Baghbazaar. On that day the seed for the life-long relation of Guru and disciple was sown.

From that time onward on almost every Sunday Mr. Chakravarti met Sri Swamiji and learnt much from him by way of long discussions. What 'M' was to Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarat Chandra was to Sri Swamiji at least to some extent. He kept a record of these conversations between himself and his great teacher. These have been published several times. He has set forth the views of Swami Vivekananda on several social and religious problems in these records in a very forceful and vivid manner. Sri Sarat Chandra had a very good command of Sanskrit and he used to carry on correspondence with Swami Vivekananda in that language. He left a collection of beautiful hymns in Sanskrit which is well-known to the followers of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. He has also written a couple of books in Bengali.

Sri Sarat Chandra had the good fortune to be loved dearly by Swami Vivekananda. He has also contributed notably to the promulgation of the spiritual message of Sri Swamiji. He has thus earned a permanent place in the memory of all who owe allegiance to the Great Master and Sri Swamiji.

May his soul rest in Divine Peace for ever !

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

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## THE TASK BEFORE US

### I

The marvellous advances of modern science and the ascent of the new world to a social, political and cultural internationalism during the last fifty years have synchronised with the evolution of a new civilization in India. The Muslim invasions of the twelfth century and the slow but steady infiltration of western thought and culture in later years—though they were powerless to change the cultural pattern of Hindu civilization—have left an indelible impress on it. These historic factors have necessitated a readjustment and revaluation in the social, political and cultural expressions of Indian life. The mode of such readjustments has come very largely to be determined by the international turn western civilization has taken in these years.

Internationalism today is a swell idea. Normal social life in a modern country is part of a social structure which is world-wide; and a system of international commerce and banking

maintains the standard of life. The practice of government in the modern world is being internationalised, all countries thinking in terms of a common political pattern. A universal system of education and the organisation of the knowledge of science to serve the ends of 'civilized' life have remarkably hastened the pace of a cultural internationalism. To the currents of this all-round internationalism India has been quick to react sympathetically: India's powers of response to extraneous stimuli have been achieving considerable conformity to the externals of this international civilization. More than that is India's anxious desire to join this international banquet in spirit as well, which expresses itself as a pronounced feature of her national life today. We hear the inspired voice of India's genius appealing to the people to have an international vision, to think and strive as citizens of an international community. This indeed is a substantial earnest of

India's anxiety to take in from the West as much as will effectively help her in the new task that has devolved upon her of taking her worthy place in the New World.

It is profitable to remind ourselves in this connection that though the circumstances present themselves new, the task is not new to India and so not difficult. Long before the West thought in terms of an international order, Indian seers realised the metaphysical implications of a world-family and breathed out the words, '*Vasudhaiva kudumbakam*' (the world is a family). They were out to work out their realisation in all its ramifications; but the typical Aryan fear of the sophistications that expansion may entail and the interference of the foreign invasions very much blocked India's progress to the visualisation of a world-family. No longer shall the day be delayed when India will give form and shape to her dreams, encompassed as she is by kindred forces and encouraged by the voice of her inner being.

## II

But unhappily recent happenings in the West, the home of this modern internationalism were not at all heartening to India. The war has betrayed the utter lack of unity behind this magnificent and seemingly coalescing congeries of nations. It has not only shaken the western civilization to its very foundations, but has shattered whatever faith India reposed in its soundness. Nay, that India has started her international schooling with the bitter lessons of the war that are now being forced down her throat adds agony to embarrassment. However, the warning has been well timed. It will prevail upon India not to draw freely from western sources for the work of

reconstruction, but to limit such adoptions to the minimum required for a healthy synthesis.

As against such suggestions of beneficent adoptions from the West, it is urged that for India, with her heart and soul in spiritual preoccupations, it would be best to remain 'at home', and not to attempt at tackling a civilization which is preeminently political in temper. This trend of orthodox opinion is supported by those who argue that India lacks the political experience necessary for the task. In the absence of a natural aptitude and experience, India, it is advised, would do well not to attempt any such synthesis which is sure to jeopardise her cultural integrity and religious traditions. It shall be our endeavour here to disarm all such fears and disprove assumptions as the above. We shall also attempt to show that India, the prodigy of absorption and assimilation of benign cultural elements, the fertile field of political experiments and the home of a culture astonishingly dynamic in the spiritual and material aspects is sure to effect a successful welding of the native and the western strands of culture and civilization.

## III

True indeed that the currents of India's real life ran deeper than the layer of political life. Our Aryan ancestors thought their social unity and chastity too sacred to be experimented upon and guarded them by unscalable walls against the sophistications of accommodating to external elements. But when the necessity arose society in India spontaneously adjusted itself to multiplications and additions and even developed a political sense. The Pali texts reveal that four great kingdoms, Kosala, Magadha, Avanti and Vamsa flourished during

the time of Buddha. And what is more interesting is the mention of as many as eleven Republics which exhibited an amazing fertility of political experiment and a genuine democratic governmental structure. The growth of the Republics is a landmark in India's political evolution and a remarkable testimony to the popular republican instincts and traditions of the times. All these were the high watermarks of Buddhist supremacy.

The Greek and Scythian invasions which followed did not interfere much with the political and spiritual life of the country. Between the 4th century B. C. and the 7th century A. C., while the Maurian dynasty was at the helm of affairs, India achieved a better degree of consolidation and political evolution. In the reign of Asoka, legitimately named the Great, we get a shining example of benevolent Hindu theocracy. The Gupta period which followed was marked by the Hindu Renaissance and its glory. The Golden Age of the Guptas was a picture of the confluence of bright political and spiritual life. Such parallel development, we find, is the characteristic feature of Indian history. Throughout the history of India we see a spiritual awakening almost always preceding a political unity and development extending over more or less the whole area of the continent. The truth is borne in on us that a spiritual upheaval far from causing a languor in the political life in India, stimulated it to an abounding degree and maintained the total life of the country at a high pitch. The coming into being of the Maratha and the Sikh hegemony which gave birth in turn to a Shivaji, a Nanak and a Guru Govind Singh also witnessed a blossoming of India's

genius for spiritual and political self-expression.

Such historical evidence signalises Religion or, more correctly, spiritual consciousness as the power that unites man to man, that awakens and energises in the individual the correct benign attitude to life, his brother and society, that inspires him to practise the social virtues of love, humility, self-surrender, purity and forbearance—virtues which cement human relationships and weld individuals into society and societies into nations. As for India the above virtues have a personal and an essentially universal aspect which compels universal application. To India which sees the individual soul and Nature as the two aspects of the Eternal spiritual principle, as an apparent duality which founds the operations of the soul's universal existence, the universal application of the above virtues is only a necessary corollary and is hence intensely practical. The identity of the particular and the universal and the identity of the material and the spiritual are twin-truths born of Indian realisations. That India has actualised the latter identity in life is testified to by the recurrence of the picture that we get in Indian history of political consolidation and growth and spiritual blossoming advancing *pari passu*. At a time when the West has given the go-by to the wisdom of illuminating Life by spiritual light, it would do well to look to and learn from Indian realisations.

From what we have traced of India's political history we can, without doing violence, infer her capacity to harness the politically-tempered civilization of the West to advantage. But more than that is the evidence of her genius to maintain a parallel

health on the spiritual and material planes and to evolve a synthesis. It is exactly from that genius for a synthesis that India has to draw now for imbibing from outside what is best and combining it with her own natural endowments.

#### IV

In the interests of such a synthesis it is necessary for us to recognise the fact of western culture deriving itself from spiritual springs. We see an international ideal for a world-family taking its birth in the conception of the Universal Brotherhood of the Stoicks as early as the 4th century B. C. As a corollary to their pantheism the Stoicks pleaded for universal brotherhood. 'All men', said Epictectus, 'are brethren and God is the father of all.' Later on this idea took shape in Rome in the conception of the International Law extending to all men, and also in the idea of a Universal Empire which lay behind the claims alike of the Holy Roman Empire and of the Papacy. And we find the mediaeval political theory of Europe building mainly on these Roman foundations. It took from Rome the idea of universality and from Aristotle the idea of society as natural to man. What we get in Thomas Aquinas as the theories of the 'Two Powers' of Church and State and the theories of the Universal dominion of the successors of St. Peter are developments which testify to Europe's faith in basing political theory and practice on religious insight. Consistently enough, the dominant quality of mediaeval political thinking lay in its treatment of politics as a branch of morals.

So far as religious inspiration and moral values continued to energise political thought and action everything went on well. But the secular-

ism of the Church and its wielding of sovereign temporal powers tended to vitiate the sources of its life and brought on decay and a fall in its influence. Independent intellectuals like Luther, Calvin and Zwingli on the continent were quick to note the deterioration and denounce the assumed sovereignty of the Church. What followed was the period of the Renaissance and the Reformation. The Reformist zeal was essentially secular in character rising as it did from a spirit of revolt against the Church; hence it lacked a spiritual basis. Yet the Reformation was pre-eminently democratic in spirit and was responsible for the diffusion of a democratic attitude all over the continent and the spread of democratic institutions. But what came into being was not the genuine democracy, which involved the recognition and development of the spiritual worth in the individual, but a sham democracy. The practice of that sham democracy began with the trampling of the personality of the individual and led in time not only to the decline of democratic governments all over Europe in the nineteenth century, but to the redoubtable resurrection of the outraged common man in the rise of the proletariat which brought in its train Nazism, Communism and the iron dictatorships. Nothing speaks more eloquently than the above of the consuming eddies that lie ahead of man when he proposes to give the go-by to Religion and live. We have traced the above events to bring to light the spiritual strands from which the western culture took its rise and also to vindicate the basic truth of life that to cut the spiritual off from the material is to invite chaos and shipwreck, the extreme limits of which Europe is witnessing today.

## V

Nevertheless that the dreams about a world-family cannot go unrealised is seen in the fruitful attempts of the universal spirit to order a universal domain. We see today the triumphant march of the New World to an international consolidation in spite of all the thwartings of man. There it lies, the heart of this great consolidating genius, mangled yet breathing, the League of Nations, as though the throttled aspirations of mankind for unity taken form, and beating its ineffectual wings in the void sublime.

The League thinks and strives in all directions in international terms. The International Office of Public Health is engaged with the problems of ameliorating international health, the International Labour Office is devoted to the improvement of international labour conditions and the Diplomatic System is busy labouring at the maintenance of healthy diplomatic relations between countries. This is a deep assurance of the aspirations of the world for international unity and well-being. The theory and practice of international intercourse implicit in the League's aspirations is a sufficiently inspiring basis for ethical, altruistic action, when ethics or moral philosophy has ceased to be so. India then has no cause for depression when she turns her face to the world prospect. Rather she *can* feel encouraged to join the fruits of her labours to the genuine treasures of the West to effect a new synthesis.

## VI

To her task of evolving a new civilization consistent with her traditions and congenial to the international cultural background, India shall bring her realisation of a world-family,

the ripe experiences of her civic and national life, her political acumen and such strands of western culture which would go well with her own pattern. The excavations of Mohenjo-Daro bring to light a full-fledged civilization at least a 1,000 years old, to find whose match at that time we would in vain ransack the pages of history. Taxila, the ancient Thaneswar and the glorious Pataliputra must have resembled a Babylon or Alexandria—then ideal cities—in their being the rendezvous of shepherds and peasants, of merchants and artificers, of court and camp—a converging point of varied interests. They must have claimed rank with a modern London or a New York in being the hub of wealth and Industry, the hall of international council and the quadrangle of a world university. Our villages were the homes of real communistic practice, were the shining specimens of civic life and hospitality. Thefts required no police aid for detection and a death in a family was the occasion for spontaneous commiseration and co-operation of the entire village. Social functions continued on the basis of give and take and not on a spirit of barter. In mutual courtesy and recognition India had the largest possible basis for a civic realisation of the highest order. There is nothing in all Indian literature of greater significance for the modern Indian mind than the scene in which Hanuman contends in the darkness with the woman who guards the gates of Lanka saying in muffled tones, 'I am the city of Lanka'. To Sri Rama and his people the city of Ayodhya was a being, a personality sacred, beautiful and beloved. Here, then, we have a substantial earnest of the capacity and readiness of India to enter into larger and more efficient

organisation, even of the international variety.

For the construction of such larger organisation, then, the bricks are lying in abundance. The elements abound in our history, our literature, our traditions and our customs by which we can make ourselves worthy of the new age, a people coherent and strong. We feel ourselves drawn to join our voice with the inspired accents of one whose one passion in life was a benign Indo-European cultural synthesis: 'We are now to go out, as it were, into the waste spaces about our life, and build there those towns and bastions of self-organisation and mutual aid, by which

we are yet to become competent to deal with the modern world and all its forces of aggression'.

The whole argument would surely lose its point if it is oblivious of the supreme necessity of India's right of self-determination. India must be given a free hand to put her own house in order. In her successful march in these years towards this goal of achieving self-determination we read the promises of an early and sure fulfilment. Encouraged by such promises, we shall go forward to apply ourselves to the wheels of the new task, we have foreshadowed above, the fruition of which will be the flower of India's great mission.

## WORSHIP: ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

*By S. V. Ananda*

### I. Worship is the soul of Religion

Worship is a movement of the creature in the direction of God. A strict definition of this complex notion is difficult. It is almost co-extensive with religion; for it includes the physical, mental and social activities which we qualify as religious, as well as the attitude that prompts and the faith that sustains them. Prayer and worship are not identical, but they overlap greatly. The term worship is closely connected with the word 'worth,' and primarily it means honour or homage paid to a worthy object or person. The word Arhana in Sanskrit conveys the same notion precisely. As we ponder over the meaning of worship, rites and rituals, sacraments and cults, temples and churches, fasts and feasts, asceticism and indulgence, pageants and pilgrimages, adoration and awe, fear and

love—all are called to our mind. The various terms commonly employed in our religious tradition like Yajna, Yaga, Sava, Aradhana, Puja, Upasthana, Paricharya, Varivasya, Kainkarya Arcana, Vedana, Vritti, Seva, Diksa and the rest express the different shades of meaning that have grown round the central concept of worship.

There has been and there is no religion that has not worship as an integral part of it. Worship is the very soul of religion. Faiths like Buddhism have started as reform movements breaking away from existing dogmas and priesthood and rituals; but soon they developed worship of some kind. Man is a worshipping animal, as Carlyle puts it. The impulse of worship being congenital with man, some form of it cannot but find expression in any

society. Study of anthropology has revealed that even the most primitive people have some sort of worship. And when we watch the unfoldment of human mind, we are struck by the part played by worship in raising man from lower to higher levels until at last he becomes divine. A historical study of worship is therefore closely linked up with the unfoldment of religious consciousness in man. A brief survey of the unfoldment of man's response to the object of worship and his conceptions of it is therefore attempted here.

## II. The instinct to worship is fundamental

The drama of religion played in the heart of man is recorded in the history of evolution with little variation in accent. 'In spite of humanity having become civilized,' writes Bergson, 'in spite of the transformation of the society, we maintain that the tendencies which are and were organic in social life have remained what they were in the beginning.' Worship which is an expression of the conditioned spirit of man responding to the absolute and eternal that permeates and encompasses him is one of those factors organic to social life. This is borne out by the fact that what is enacted in the whole history of the race is epitomised more or less in the developing individual. The feeling that there is an unseen and an unknown order with which man has to adjust himself in harmony is as old as humanity, and therein we discover the first movement of religious consciousness.

This perennial response to the eternal, emerging from the human heart, is a deep psychological fact. The mind of man is a wonderful apparatus of knowledge wielding in-

finite potentialities. To cognize, to feel and to will, man alone is capable of, in such an amazing degree. By virtue of the faculty of intellect and emotion man is a self-sustaining, self-directing agent capable of experience. He takes his place just in the centre of creation; above him stretch out the vast immensities of space; below him the most complicate phenomena of animate and inanimate Nature. Gazing below, man gets an insight into his own past, the ladder of evolution; looking up the infinite Unknown beckons him across space and time. Innumerable heavenly bodies, miraculous forces incessantly working at every bit of the universe, the wonders that are revealed in every moment in the living organism and, above all, the mystery of the mind itself, have pressed for solution and clear understanding from remote antiquity. Whence all this? is a standing poser before the thinking mind for all time.

The more man seeks to penetrate into the hidden forces that work around him, the more is he impressed with the futility of such attempts. Yet it is a fundamental psychological fact that the instinctively curious mind of man is never arrested in this sustained quest. By analysis and synthesis it tries to wrest from its environments their truth. But the receding horizon of the known only entices the enquirer to the unplumbed unknown, and he is filled with awe and wonder. Scanning the infinite and wonderfully varied phenomena attracting the mind and senses, it is impossible for even the most primitive mind to lose sight of the august fact of an indefinable, impersonal, all-pervading power controlling and guiding the destiny of all creatures animate and inanimate. As a Chinese text of

great antiquity puts it, 'Notwithstanding the number of the myriad things, the Government of them is one and the same'. A perception of this unitary principle is the earliest discovery of man. Perhaps it was prompted by the individuality of the human personality itself. Intellect and emotion, the two dominant functions of the human psyche work to co-ordinate experience and make the individual subject a knowing and willing agent. Experience is a unity; the environment that supplies it also must be a unity. Things are distinguished or differentiated only in so far as man appreciates them analytically; but the mind is equally synthetic and grasps the unity in and through the perception of the diverse things. This perception of unity—a cosmos—and the sense of wonder and awe inspired by them, and the recognition of the relation of the part to the whole, individual to totality, form the first and earliest content of the religious consciousness engendering the sense of worship.

Apart from the sense of awe, another fundamental fact of evolution has contributed to the unfoldment of the religious consciousness. This is self-giving, or what is denoted by sacrifice. Psychic evolution has three stages: infra-rational, rational and supra-rational. If we study the nutritive chain in Nature we will easily see that Nature sacrifices every moment old forms to build up new ones. The old tissue dies to build up a new one; the seed perishes to bring forth the tree; the mother denies herself to rear up the child. This instinctive urge to give up self-interest runs parallel to the other universal impulse to preserve one's own self. No cost is considered too dear by any creature to assure its own existence;

but all the same this tenacious clinging to life is found to be often superceded by the equally powerful urge to give up. In lower life the mother organism swallows the young ones multiplied from its own body. But as life ascends in the scale of evolution and the brain cells are formed, the tendency is modified. There is even at the infra-rational level a readiness to fly at the face of danger to sacrifice oneself to save another. In some of the highly developed mammals the care of the young ones is specially noteworthy. The word *vatsalya* the term for expressing the excessive fondness of a cow for its calf (*vatsa*), is a poem in itself. Some of the birds are ready to face death in their attempt to defend their nests. This readiness to sacrifice, still instinctive in the stage of infra-rational existence, reaches greater maturation in man. The spirit of rational sacrifice blossoms beautifully in the human being in whom spirit is manifested most. These, then, the spirit of sacrifice, altruism, and self-denial form the second potent factor worthy to be noted in the developing phenomenon of religion. In man's self-oblation to god, in that sublime theme of worship, this tendency reached its fullness.

### III. Through Fear to Love

Searching for the beginnings of religious consciousness, particularly the source of the worshipping impulse, we have arrived at certain fundamentals of existence — the relation of the part to the whole that is a cosmos, the awe-inspiring unity behind the changing and distracting diversity, the attraction of the many for the one, the unity of the experiencing personality, and the self-love and self-sacrifice progressively developed in the evol-

ving organizms. But at the birth of man and at the dawn of humanity the intellect is shrouded in a thick layer of ignorance. The vastness of the universe and the multiplicity of forces working therein are only very inadequately appraised. The meaning and significance of sacrifice are totally unthought of ; for thought and understanding are still rudimentary. The dominant feeling is that of fear — man quailing and supplicating before the relentless destructive forces of Nature threatening annihilation every moment. Exposed to the inclemencies and fatal freaks of Nature's Powers, the early mind attributed motives to these personified forces and tried to propitiate them by presents and offerings. It is impossible to escape such feeling with a limited mental vision. Fear and consequent desire of appeasing the genii of dynamic Nature have formed the earliest expression of worship. The desperate effort of the bewildered creature to come to terms with the surrounding mystery is by no means a stage entirely passed by humanity. To the extent there is an 'other' than the self, fear is bound to persist ; only the instruments of propitiation undergo refinement as culture advances. As long as limitations of life are a matter of keen experience, fear and propitiation have their role to play. Prayer for warding off evil, or supplications to gods for safety are by no means indications of antiquity ; but only signs of spiritual immaturity. The 'word' primitive thus has no real place in the study of religious consciousness.

At a later stage in the development of the religious mind the motive of propitiation slowly gives way to pure love and adoration. As the knowledge of Reality becomes deeper, the seeking mind unravels the benign aspect

of the Power that works in Nature. The vision of unity and orderliness, the plan and wisdom behind the minutest workings of the universe, engenders a growing awareness of the friendly aspect of the world and the Law behind it. The great faculties at the disposal of the worshipping spirit—feeling, reasoning and imagination—are deeply stirred, and it recognises the Power that brought the universe into existence in the relation of a Father, Mother or Master. The seeker of truth begins to reason : Had it not been for the self-giving love at the core of the great Reality (the most potent urge of which is felt by man in his own self-sacrificing love) what would have called up this great show of the universe ? Can mere chance or blind force bring forth even the trivial midget, allot for it a worthy share of the joy of being and, with parental care, minister to its needs ?

This novel approach to the Great Unknown in a purely humane attitude took man to the next higher step of worship and religion. A fresh, direct, filial, and profoundly realistic response to the ordaining and ruling Power of the universe was the direct result of this new vision. All the great religions of the world exhibit these two phases of worship ; namely, a phase that is prompted by fear and another that is the outcome of creaturely love.

#### IV. The Vedantic Ideal — Acknowledgement of the Transcendent in every Act

Like art or science or any other activity of life, worship is an affair of the community as well as the individual, even though the individual aspect ought to be stressed most. Intense spiritual vitality flourishes in individuals only when the community at large is astir with such activity.

A society indifferent to science and pledged entirely to war or money-getting cannot count on a succession of eminent scientists. So also a society indifferent to religion cannot produce a number of saints or any laudable pattern of worship. Vedic religion was aware of this from early times, and laid all emphasis on the spiritualization of all activity of life through love and sacrifice finding natural fulfilment in the entire life of the individual and the society. The transcendent was acknowledged in every act; and each deed either consciously or unconsciously expressed worship. In the Vedic religion worship has entered into the texture of life consciously, and its emotional colour has ranged from fear through reverence and love to self-oblation or self-negation.

The awakening disclosure of the Infinite has always come through the

finite medium. The attraction of eternity is experienced in time. So the Vedic religion has always taken man as he is : a social sensuous, emotional creature keenly aware of the visible environment but only dimly aware of the unseen and Unknown. The study of Upasana or worship in the Vedic religion therefore presents a vast and rich landscape of different colour, form and activity enlivened by a profound philosophy and sustained by deeply spiritual experiences. Higher forms of worship are always prompted by a profoundly trustful and reverent love. And the law of love demands some kind of knowledge of the object regarded with love and reverence. Next time we shall therefore study briefly the object of worship—the Upasya—as revealed in the Vedas and in Indian spiritual tradition.

### The Satyam-Sivam-Sundaram

This Highest Energy-Love Beauty is a person, an individual, the Infinite Mother of this universe,—the God of gods,—the Lord of lords, Omnipresent yet separate from the universe,—the Soul of souls, yet separate from every soul,—the Mother of this universe, because She has produced it, its Ruler as She guides it with the greatest love, and in the long run brings everything back to Herself. Through Her command the sun and moon shine, the clouds rain, and death stalks upon the earth.

She energises every cause unmistakably to produce the effect. Her will is the only law, and as She cannot make a mistake, Nature's laws—Her will—can never be changed, She is the life of the law of Karma or causation,—She is the fructifier of every action.

— Swami Vivekananda.

## HUMANITY AND WAR

*By Chunilal Mitra, M.A., B.T.,*

### War, the Pervading feature in life

'Whenever vice prevails and virtue degenerates I come down on earth to save the virtuous and to destroy the vicious' thus said Sri Krishna in the Bhagavadgita. A similar voice is audible in the Bible, 'I come not to send peace, but the sword.' They heralded that war is a necessity to wipe out the ills of the society and to reconstruct it once more on a right mould. Whether we believe in the Gita or the Bible, whether we sneer at a Krishna or a Christ, it is an admitted fact that ever since the battle of Kurukshetra four thousand years back, we have at least thousand wars that have faced our planet of a similiar or of a lesser magnitude. Indeed, destruction means construction and any social upheaval means living regeneration. The mother dies out so that her child may live. The seed is destroyed but the sprout, and from it the tree, spring forth. The chicken is, when the egg is not. It is often in the decay of one thing that we find the birth of another. And this war is the pervading feature in world's history. Rather it is an indispensable factor in human civilisation. Not only we have wars between one nation against another, or between the kings and his subjects, but we have other wars in legion; wars between the employers and the employees, between the labourers and the capitalists, between the illiterate and the intelligentsia; in short, between the haves and the havenots.

War is the pervading feature even in the history of the individual. Man is always at war with himself. His

one concept collides with another; his intellect fights with his emotion; his better self wages war against his baser self. Man is at civil war with himself within. Thus we have a perpetual struggle, both within and without. This means that even if we have a social equilibrium as regards material objects, in pelf and power, in wealth, position or possession, we will be always at variance at least in the mental plane. Two men of the same social rank will do and move differently, as their inner nature leads them. One may indulge himself in excess and wickedness while the other may give himself to charity and benevolence; one may squander away his money in vile deeds, the other may give the same in public service. So, Spencer's Social equilibrium and a millennium can never be reached. And, for worse or for better, war is the key to world-process.

### More often Ideas Fight, not Men

But surely it is not the weapon but the individual man that fights. So it is a vague attempt to abolish war by means of disarmament. The simple reason is that men fight and not their weapons. Nay, not really men but it is their ideas that fight. More often than not, it is ideas that are at the root of all wars. It is Man's psyche rather than his physique that fights, though the latter intervenes in the process as an accessory.

### War is no Unmixed Evil

And while at war we see man in his real perspective. There alone humanity is revealed in its multifarious aspects and in all its nakedness.

This naturally leads us to deal with war's legacy, on humanity—what war results in. When the war subsides what it leaves behind is the same as when a flood subsides. It is both disastrous and fruitful. Flood brings famine and pestilence but not rarely does it bring fertility to the soil. It is true that peace hath her victories no less renowned than those of wars.

But it is also true that war has contributed no less good to the world than any peace attempt. To wars humanity owes some of its greatest inventions that have made human lives so easy and comfortable. It is said that necessity is the mother of invention and necessity is nowhere so keenly felt as in wars. Surely the man who commits mistakes can attain the path of truth. Trees do not commit wrong, nor do stones fall into error, and hardly do the animals transgress the laws of nature. It is only man that errs and possibly he can make right. As there is a soul of goodness in things evil, there is a potential right in the 'mistakes' of man. Man may be taking a wrong step in making war, but it would be preposterous to make a sweeping conclusion that war is an unmixed evil. He who demolishes a mansion can perhaps build a similar one. It ultimately depends on the humanity itself and the motive that underlies the respective wars.

#### **Whether War can be Ceased or not**

Now, whether humanity wants war or not, and whether the result of war on humanity is worse or better, one thing is evident that, war is an inevitable event. It has never ceased nor will it ever be ceased.

We have recently been hearing of the Convention of Religions, World

Congress of Faiths, Disarmament proposals, and hearing here and there of the World Federation and of the commonwealth of mankind. But the question that naturally comes in is, is No-war a possibility, or is it a mere unintelligible jargon ?

#### **Humanity to be enthroned, not Nationality**

As an answer we may say that we are not sure whether in the near future peace will be forestalled on a firm pedestal and humanity will be ushered into an era of hope and goodwill. The reason is that, so long as the respective nations would give their Nationality a high and dominant place over Humanity they would not be brothers in the true sense of the term. But when they would give Humanity a high and sovereign place over Nationality they would be true brothers, and a Brotherhood of Humanity may inaugurate. Finally, as a reply to the query whether humanity is out of War-Zone, we are only to wait and mark time till we see the 'shape of the things to come'. But up till then what we have done is only a stepping stone, a prelude, and an apex to what we should do really, viz.—the federation of Man or of world-cultures. For what we want is 'not merely a universal Religion with all its quintessence but Experience as a whole as it has unfolded in the history of man.'

#### **War, a factor for Dynamism**

And whatever be the attempt, the A B C of human nature—its primordial and fundamental instincts and inclinations are still the same as they were some thousands of years ago. But as we believe in the evolution theory, in the dynamic aspect of society and in the creativeness of human personality we do possibly

believe in a state of world-peace in the long run. So far, our belief is an optimistic one. But war if it becomes extinct, a complete adjustment in the human sphere—social, political, and economical can never be reached. And thence if we are called pessimists we

refuse ourselves to be such. For as an ultimate analysis regarding war or No-war we are only to say that an optimistic zero is an impossibility. Humanity may not, and possibly should not, find an age when war can reach a Zero Degree.

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

The time requires that a better interpretation should be given to the underlying harmony of the Upanishadic texts; whether they are dualistic or non-dualistic, quasi-dualistic or so forth, it has to be shown before the world at large; and this work is required as much in India as outside of India, and I, through the grace of God, had the great good fortune to sit at the feet of one, whose whole life was such an interpretation, whose life, a thousand-fold more than whose teaching, was a living commentary on the texts of the Upanishads, was in fact, the spirit of the Upanishads living in human form. Perhaps I have got a little of that harmony; I do not know whether I shall be able to express it or not. But this is my attempt, my mission in life, to show that the Vedantic Schools are not contradictory, that they all necessitate each other, all fulfil each other, and one, as it were, is the stepping stone to the other, until the goal, the Advaita, the *Tattvamasi*, is reached.

We forget this great idea, and you will find that there are persons among pandits—I should think ninety-eight per cent—who are of opinion that either the Advaitist will be true, or the Dvaitist will be true..... Thus it remains. Then came one whose life was the explanation, whose life was the working out of the harmony that is the background of all the

different sects of India, I mean Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. It is his life that explains that both of these are necessary.

Wherein lies the originality of the Gita, which distinguishes it from all preceding scriptures? It is this: Though before its advent, Yoga, Jnana, Bhakti, etc. had each its strong adherents, they all quarrelled among themselves, each claiming superiority for his own chosen path; no one ever tried to seek for reconciliation among these different paths. It was the author of the Gita who for the first time tried to harmonise these. He took the best from what all the sects then existing had to offer, and threaded them in the Gita. But even where Krishna failed to show a complete reconciliation (*samanvaya*) among these warring sects, it was fully accomplished by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa in the nineteenth century.

God, though everywhere, can be known to us in and through human character. No character was ever so perfect as Ramakrishna, and that should be the centre round which we ought to rally; at the same time allowing everybody to regard him in his own light, either as God, Saviour, teacher, model, or great man, just as he pleases.

I had a deep interest in religion and philosophy from my childhood, and our books teach renunciation as the

highest ideal to which man can aspire. It only needed the meeting with a great Teacher—Ramakrishna Paramahamsa—to kindle in me the final determination to follow the path he himself had trod, as in him I found my highest ideal realised. .... His whole life was spent in breaking down the barriers of sectarianism and dogma. He formed no sect. Quite the reverse. He advocated and strove to establish absolute freedom of thought. He was a great Yogi..... My teaching is my own interpretation of our ancient books, in the light which my Master shed upon them.

I am a disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, a perfect Sannyasin whose influence and ideas I fell under. The great Sannyasin never assumed the negative or critical attitude towards other religions, but showed their positive side,—how they could be carried into life and practised. To fight, to assume the antagonistic attitude is the exact contrary of his teaching, which dwells on the truth that the world is moved by love.

All that I am, all that the world itself will some day be, is owing to my Master, Sri Ramakrishna, who incarnated and experienced and taught this wonderful unity which underlies everything, having discovered it alike in Hinduism, in Islam, and in Christianity.

Sri Ramakrishna never spoke a harsh word against anyone. So beautifully tolerant was he that every sect thought that he belonged to them. He loved everyone. To him all religions were true. He found a place for each one. He was free, but free in love, not in 'thunder'. The mild type creates; the thundering type spreads. Paul was the thundering type to spread the light. (And it has been said by many that Swami

Vivekananda himself was a kind of St. Paul to Sri Ramakrishna.)

Brothers, you have touched another chord in my heart, the deepest of all, and that is the mention of my teacher, my Master, my hero, my ideal, my God in life—Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. If there has been anything achieved by me, by thoughts or words or deeds, if from my lips has ever fallen one word that has helped any one in the world, I lay no claim to it, it was his. But if there have been curses falling from my lips, if there has been hatred coming out of me, it is all mine, and not his. All that has been weak has been mine, and all that has been life-giving, strengthening, pure and holy has been his inspiration, his words, and he himself. Yes, my friends, the world has yet to know that man. We read in the history of the world, about prophets and their lives, and these came down to us through centuries of writings and workings by their disciples. Through thousands of years of chiselling and modelling, the lives of the great prophets of yore come down to us; and yet, in my opinion, not one stands so high in brilliance as that life which I saw with my own eyes, under whose shadow I have lived, at whose feet I have learnt everything—the life of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Aye, friends, you all know the celebrated saying of the Gita :—"Whenever, O descendant of Bharata, there is decline of Dharma, and rise of Adharma, then I body Myself forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of Dharma, I come into being in every age." Along with it you have to understand one thing more. Such a thing is before us today. Before one of these tidal waves of spirituality comes, there are

whirlpools of lesser manifestation all over society. One of these comes up, at first unknown, unperceived, and unthought of, assuming proportion, swallowing, as it were and assimilating all the other little whirlpools, becoming immense, becoming a tidal wave, and falling upon society with a power which none can resist. Such is happening before us. If you have eyes you will see it. If your heart is open you will receive it. If you are truth-seekers you will find it. Blind, blind indeed is the man who does not see the signs of the day! Aye, this boy born of poor Brahman

parents in an out-of-the-way village, of which very few of you have even heard is literally being worshipped in lands which have been fulminating against heathen worship for centuries. Whose power is it? Is it mine or yours? It is none else than the power which was manifested here as Ramakrishna Paramahansa..... Here has been a manifestation of an immense power, just the very beginning of whose workings we are seeing, and before this generation passes away you will see more wonderful workings of that power. It has come just in time for the regeneration of India.

## DISCIPLINE FOR SELF-KNOWLEDGE

*(Sadhana panchaka of Sri Sankara retold)*

Constantly study the Revealed Scripture and engage yourself in the performance of the pious duties laid down therein. Do those duties with great attention, reverence and faith, and as worship of God. Give up all craving for ephemeral results to be reaped in future. Such a conduct of life will help to get rid of all seeds of sin and evil, and arrest all spiritual demerit. But even good deeds done with an eye on earthly pleasures are a hindrance on the path of Self-realization. Therefore argue within yourself and settle that mundane joys are not beyond evil. Always persevere to exclude all desire except that for the realization of the Atman. Having fulfilled these you are fit to speed out of the environment of your home which has been keeping you bound.

Seek then the company of the saintly. Cultivate abundantly adoring love of the Blessed Lord, and devote yourself to His service. Consciously practise every moment inward still-

ness, self-mastery, retreat from distracting outside objects, fortitude, deep reverential faith and concentration of thought. Give up entirely all work imposed from outside or prompted by natural likes. To draw near a noble exemplar who has realized the Atman is the next step. Serve him daily taking shelter at his holy feet, and make a reverent request to him to enlighten you about the Absolute Divine Reality, eternal and imperishable. Listen from him the treasured texts of Vedanta which will give illumination.

Continuously reflect on the sense of those texts. Never lose faith in the truths taught in the Vedanta, which form the crown of the Vedas. Turn your back on all wrangling; you may reason in harmony with the Holy Writ. Resolve that you are Brahman and Brahman alone; but do not fail to cast out every day all conceit based on egoism. Banish from your thought

the idea that you are the body. Dispute not with the wise.

Remedy the ills of hunger and thirst with food supplied by the pious without constraint. Do not beg for savoury dishes ; on the other hand be contented with what is vouchsafed by Providence. Innure yourself to the changing conditions of climate and weather. Practise due restraint of speech and choose the position of a spectator without throwing yourself into fondness and cruelty for fellow-beings.

Delight in the freedom of solitude and pour your mind into the Highest Being without break or lapse. By repeated and careful meditation apprehend the all-pervading Perfect Self—Purnatma. See that the immediate knowledge of the Supreme Self

has proved to you that this changing limited world is a contradiction, an appearance, and therefore it is annulled by the knowledge of the Reality. Through the force of Illumination dissolve the seeds of previous deeds which hold the possibility of future births. Do not attach yourself to deeds of a similar type which entail rebirth. Work out now itself the effects of those deeds that have brought about this life, and be established in the realization that your Self is the SUPREME SELF.

If a person ponders over these fivehortatory passages daily with calmness and fixity of purpose, he will soon find himself free from the grave troubles brought on by the fire of Samsara, through the grace of Knowledge.

### 'The War which He Came to Bring'

It is true there is difficulty in entering into godliness. But this difficulty does not arise from the religion which begins in us, but from the irreligion which is still there. If our senses were not opposed to penitence, and if our corruption were not opposed to the purity of God there would be nothing in this painful to us. We suffer only in proportion as the vice which is natural to us resists supernatural grace. Our heart feels torn asunder between these opposed efforts. But it would be very unfair to impute this violence to God, who is drawing us on, instead of to the world, which is holding us back. It is as a child, which a mother tears from the arms of robbers, in the pain it suffers, should love the loving and legitimate violence of her who procures its liberty, and detest only the impetuous and tyrannical violence of those who detain it unjustly. The most cruel war which God can make with men in this life is to leave them without that war which He came to bring. "I came to send war", He says, "and to teach them of this war. I came to bring fire and the sword." Before Him the world lived in this false peace.

— Pascal

## SADASIVA BRAHMENDRA

By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

Sadasiva Brahman—as he is generally known in Tamil land—was one of the greatest among the Advaitic philosophers, mystics and yogins in recent times. The word Brahman has been used by Tamilians only in reference to Suka and Sadasiva. Sadasiva was equally eminent as a poet also. He was one of the best proofs of the ever-living vitality and value of Hinduism.

We do not know exactly the date of the birth of Sadasiva Brahmendra. It is said that he lived in the last quarter of the 17th and in the first half of the 18th centuries. His birthname was Sivaramakrishnieri alias Pichukuppi. His father Chokkanatha Nakhi was a great scholar and author, and died when he was young. He lived afterwards with his mother in Tiruvisanalloor in the Tanjore District. It is said that the famous Iyaval (Sridhara Venkatesa Iyer) of Tiruvisanalloor, the equally famous Ramabhadra Dixitar (who was the son-in-law of Chokkanatha Nakhi and the teacher of Sadasiva after Chokkanatha Nahki's death), Atmabodhendra Sarasvati, the Acharya of Kamakoti Peetham at Conjeevaram from 1586 to 1638 and Bhashyam Gopalakrishna Sastri were fellow students of Sadasiva and were brilliant and eminent men. Sadasiva was a disciple of Sri Paramasivendra Sarasvati who was the fifty-fifth Acharya of the Kamakotipeetha and who occupied the Peetha from 1539 to 1586. He refers to his discipleship in the *Atmavidya Vilasa*<sup>1</sup> and in his *Brahma Sutra Vritti*.<sup>2</sup>

There is a story that he was married when he was young. The story speaks

of the dramatic turn which his life took in the face of some external circumstances. News came that his wife has attained puberty and he was waiting to participate in the feast in his house when Sadasiva felt a sudden compelling call from within to renounce everything and go away. And he obeyed his inner voice. Thus he was a case of marriage proving itself a consecration to the bride without her being an impediment in the path of his own God-realisation. There is a fell tendency today to think of sex mostly in terms of pleasure and occasionally in terms of procreation, but never in terms of self-control and service of God.

On one occasion some pandits were overcome by Sadasiva in debate. They went to his *guru* and complained about his method in argument. The *guru* asked him: 'When are you going to learn to become silent ? From that moment Sadasiva became a *mauni* and an *avadhoota* and wandered all over the land in the ecstasy of God-realisation. When his *guru* learnt about this, he wondered and said : How high he has gone ? I am yet to reach that height.'

His works are *Brahma Sutra Vritti*, *Yoga Sutra Vritti*, *Siddhanta Kalparali*, *Sivayoga Deepika*, *Gururatnamala Stavam*, *Sivamanusa Pooja*,

1 देशिक परमशिवेन्द्र वशात्  
परमशिवेन्द्रार्थं पादुकां नौमि ।  
परमशिवेन्द्र गुरुशिष्येन  
श्रीसदाशिवेदेष ॥

2 जडः काहं बालः कन्च गहनवेदान्तसरणि  
तदायाम्नायार्थं परमशिवयोगीन्द्रकृपया ।

*Saparyaparyaya Stava, Sri Dakshina-moorti Dhyanam, Bodharya, Navamani-mala, Atmanusandhanam, Navavarna-ratnamala, Svapnoditam, Manoniyanam, Svanubhootiprakasika, Brahma Keertana Tarangini* and *Atma Vidya Vilasam*. All of them are of surpassing merit; but the most popular of them are his songs and his wonderful poem, *Atma Vidya Vilasam* which records in singularly mellifluous and melodious verses his search for and attainment of the Absolute. His *Brahma Sutra Vritti* and *Yoga Sutra Vritti* expound the famous *Brahma Sutras* of Vyasa and *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali with the utmost brevity and clarity.

There is a story that he sent a manuscript copy of his great poem *Atma Vidya Vilasam* to king Sarabhoji (1711-1729) of Tanjore through Ananta Pandita and blessed the king and said that a son would be born to him. It is said also that he was an admirer of Kartika Tirunal, king of Travancore who was a great soldier, scholar, devotee and musical artist. Sadasiva wrote a drama, *Vasulakshmikalyanam* about the king's marriage with Princess Vasulakshmi who was a daughter of Sindhuraja and composed a treatise on Alamkara (aesthetics) called *Ramavarmayasobhushanam* on the model of *Prataparudrayasobhushanam* by Vaidyanatha. He wrote also a drama *Lakshmikalyanam* referring to king Martanda Varma of Travancore (1729-58).

In the *Stotra* by Balasubrahmanyayatindra who was a disciple of Sadasiva Brahman and in the *Sadasiva Braharendra Stuti* by the late Acharya of Sringeri we get a description of the yogic *Siddhis* (powers) of Sadasiva. It is said that on one occasion he went into *samadhi* in the Kaveri at Kodumudi and was over-

whelmed by the flood and buried deep in the sands. When the flood subsided, some workmen who were digging up the sands found blood coming out. They then dug him out and to the utter wonderment of all Sadasiva got up and walked off. On another occasion he was found lying down on a heap of grain in the field. The owners ran up to beat him thinking that he was a thief but found themselves unable to lift up their hands or to move. The night wore out thus and in the morning he went away. On another occasion when he was going through the forest the woodcutters made him carry a huge pile of wood to the village. But when he threw down the bundle it caught fire and was burnt. It is said further that he took in yogic flight a number of boys to Madura to witness the Vrishabha Vahanam festival there. It is said also that similarly he took to Srirangam a disciple who wanted to see Srirangam and left him there and disappeared. It is said that he brought to life a dead child at Tiruchendur. Many such miracles are associated with his name. The story is told that while he uttered the thousand names of Siva in the Madura temple, lotus flowers were being showered on the lingam from the sky.

I may refer here to a charming story which has a simple human interest. The Kanchi Kamakoti-peetha Jagadguru Sri Paramasivendra Sarasvati used to ask his disciple Sadasiva to do the *puja* of the Chandra Maheswara linga in the Mutt. One day Sadasiva sat down to do *puja* and went into *Samadhi* immediately. A crowd was waiting and looking on. When the Acharya came there and asked him, why he has not begun the *puja* Sadasiva replied : 'I

have finished it.' The Acharya wondered and asked him : ' You have not performed *abhishekam* or *archana* or *naivedyam*'. Sadasiva fell at his feet and said, ' you have taught me the infinite Brahman. I have been realising the Supreme. How can I worship the Infinite ? Please excuse me and enlighten me'. The Acharya then told him joyfully : ' You are a Brahmiibhoota (one who has become Brahman). From that day Sadasiva was called Sadasiva Brahmam.

Two other stories relating to the saint are particularly memorable. It is said that on one occasion he went unconscious of his surroundings and wrapt in *yoga* into the Nawab's camp when the Nawab was with his *ghosha* ladies near Trichinopoly. He went as an *avadhoota*. The Nawab seeing him naked in the presence of ladies got furious and with his sword cut off one of the arms of the sage. The sage walked off as if nothing had happened. The Nawab then felt that he had wronged a man of God and followed him to seek his forgiveness. After some days the saint came down to the ordinary plane of consciousness and asked the Nawab why he followed him. The Nawab owned his fault and prayed for pardon. The saint then passed his other hand over the stump and the cut hand came up again at

once. He then pardoned and blessed the Nawab and went away.

The other story is equally interesting. Vijayaraghunathan Thundaman was the ruler of the Pudukotah State from 1735 to 1769 A. D. About 1738 A. D. Sadasiva Brahmam was living in the forest near Tiruvarangulam in the State. The king who was familiarly known as Sivajnana Puram Durai met the saint and treated him with great respect. Sadasiva wrote down some religious instruction on sand as he was under a vow of silence. The king learnt it and kept the stored sand in the palace temple for worship. That worship is going on even to this day.

It is said that the saint died about 1750 or 1753 A.D. There is a story that he said he would attain *Siddhi* on Jyeshta suddha Dasami in the month of Mithuna and on that day a Brahmin would bring a Banalinga from Benares and that the lingam should be installed by the side of his *Samadhi*. A lingam was brought as predicted by him. The saint entered the pit which was dug according to his directions and went into *Samadhi*. A *Samadhi* was built there and the lingam was installed in it at Nerur. The Kings of Pudukkotah have made ample provision for the performance of religious services there for ever.

## CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA

*By Swami Akhilananda.*

To talk on India's caste system we shall have to study the Indian outlook of life a little. Spiritual culture or unfoldment is the only goal of life in India. It is not merely one of the many activities in life. In India all interests are subordinated to religion. It is the keynote of national life. Social, political, economical, and other activities are planned according to the spiritual standard. They must blend together to give us a beautiful harmony under the guiding force of religion. Many of our Western friends do not understand the background of our national institutions. To them religion is one of many pursuits. It is not so to us. All activities must be kept under that ideal. So spiritual and religious ideals regulate our caste system. Our social institutions are formulated and rated according to the spiritual culture and understanding of man.

We have two sister institutions, that is, Hindu religion and Hindu society. Many persons often confuse these two. Hindu religion gives tremendous freedom to the individual members. Every man or woman is allowed to worship according to his or her own inner tendencies and urges. Perhaps you will be amused to know that even a child is allowed to worship God in its own way, without being ostracized by its family or friends. But in social life Hindus are unfortunately very rigid nowadays. It was not so limited and narrow in the earlier days. On the other hand, in a country like America, the social laws are liberal and flexible, while the religious practices are very rigid. All the members of a

family there or its neighbours must belong to one particular church or denomination and then they can become members of one society. Otherwise they will be persecuted and criticized and often excommunicated. Hindu religious practices are purely individualistic while social customs and rules are collective. But we see the opposite in the West. So many casual visitors and hasty thinkers of the West criticize our social customs. They should study the principle behind Hindu social institutions before they make any comment.

Now, however, to come to the caste system. It exists throughout the world. It is not the fault of Hindu religion or society, but it is the fault of human nature. When you study history you find that the Greeks had a caste system, the Romans also had a caste system. The different countries have different types of caste systems based on different principles. The caste system of the West, America, and Europe, is based on racial distinction and material possession while the Hindu caste system is based on spiritual culture and unfoldment.

When Mr. Bernard Shaw was in Bombay, the reporters wanted his views of Indian untouchability. He answered, 'I have no interest in untouchability in India. We have this untouchability in England too'. Social exclusiveness is not the fault merely of India, or of Hindu society, but the fault of all selfish groups of all peoples. When the vast majority of persons belonging to different religions and different societies become selfish then they express exclusiveness

and practise different forms of untouchability. We all wish, however, that the caste system in India should be flexible. It ought to be changed according to the original ideals of caste.

In India the caste system is based on spiritual development. A group of persons highly spiritual (the Brahmanas) were at the top of the caste. They were devoted to Brahman (God). They lived in God-consciousness. In earlier days they were the leaders of Hindu society. They never claimed any exclusive rights and privileges. Spiritually they were tremendously powerful. They were full of the spirit of service and sacrifice. In the early age, many thousands of years ago, they had only one caste. Later on, when the Aryans came in contact with the non-Aryans in India, when they began to spread out, they needed a group of persons to protect them from other aliens. Some of the Aryans who had ruling and military tendencies were given charge of the administration and protection of the people. They were called Kshatriyas (Second Caste). Again, when life became more complex they found out they must have some who would devote their time and energy to develop trade, commerce and industry. They were the Vaisyas (Third Caste). The labourers were called the Sudras (Fourth Caste).

The Aryans began to spread out still further. They met other races. Some of them were anxious to have the Aryan culture and civilization. They were given religious and cultural training, etc. and were taken into Hindu society. We were not known in those days as Hindus but as Aryans. Some of these non-Aryans, however, became very stubborn. They did not like to have anything to do with the Aryan civilization. Some of them were

also afraid of these Aryans. Then, many of these non-Aryans took shelter in mountains or jungles while others who mixed with the Aryans were influenced by them. They gradually began to know and like the Hindus and wanted to be within Hindu society. They were taken into the fifth class, known by our Western friends as untouchables. Many of the subdivisions were formed at this period for economical and such other reasons.

The divisions of caste were made according to the tendencies and activities of man. The Hindus were fully aware of the mental differences of man. He conducts himself according to his inner nature and quality. They knew that different individuals were at different stages and steps of spiritual evolution and that they could unfold their spiritual consciousness even though they belonged to different groups. Every man could reach the state of God-consciousness (Brahmanhood) by performing his respective duties according to his mental constitution. So the Hindu leaders planned the caste system that everyone could evolve and reach the highest goal of life. The caste system was to create no obstacle to the religious practices and growth of the individuals. So the whole system was not at all exclusive. You would be interested to know that this caste system until perhaps a thousand years ago was very flexible. One who belonged to the lower class could become a member of the higher class according to his spiritual development. Besides the different groups used to intermingle very freely in their social relations.

This institution gives us an idea of Hindu genius. Hindus have a comprehensive and synthetic mind. They try to harmonize different elements

without destroying their individuality. History tells that when different races are thrown together by circumstances, migration, conquest, etc., the powerful race usually takes up three methods, extermination, subordination and harmonization or assimilation.

The Hindus, however, took up the method of harmonization. They assimilated the other races who came in contact with them by giving them Hindu culture. Perhaps you know how many races came to India, and these new-comers were grouped together and given certain business and trades (according to their nature) to develop them gradually. They were not denied religious culture and other opportunities. You will be interested to know that when some of them became spiritually great they were given equal respect and social rights. Some of the great saints of India do not belong to the Brahman caste. Some belong even to the so-called untouchable groups, yet they are worshipped and respected for their spiritual culture. So, the Indian caste system is based on man's inner spiritual unfoldment.

The Hindu genius gave a very wonderful scheme of life in which every member had an equal place in its society. A person was not looked down upon but was respected for his spiritual development. This system protected society from destructive competitions and saved the economical structure of the country. Of course, we have to admit frankly that the real spirit of caste has not been observed for the last few centuries. Many undesirable elements entered into our social customs and rules which should be reformed. I have to admit equally that there are social evils of various forms in every country.

In course of time the Buddhists came into power in India. They gradually spread their religion and culture outside India. They sent out many missionaries to all parts of Asia and Europe and brought back many persons belonging to other races. The new-comers settled in India. The Hindus tried to assimilate all these different groups and to reorganize society ; but unfortunately at that time India was invaded and finally conquered by the Mohammedans. The Hindus had to fight against the foreign invasion and its influence. So they became very conservative to protect their society and culture from aggressive invaders and aliens. They became very rigid in their social customs and functions. Some of the rigid rules of the temples were also introduced. There have, however, been many movements in India to reform our present caste system. All these reformers are great spiritual leaders and have brought about tremendous changes. There is now a great movement which is actually demolishing the rigidity of the Hindu caste system.

Of course, we are told that Western education is helping us. I am not going to deny or affirm this. Western friends want us to believe that Western culture and activities are liberalizing us ; but I shall mention a few facts which will be surprising. This caste system is not only the rule of conduct in America and Europe towards negroes and Asiatics but is also observed by the Westerners in India even in connection with their religious worship. Some of the Christian churches do not allow Eurasians and Indian Christians to worship with the Western worshippers of Christ.

I want to emphasize that the principles underlying the Hindu caste system are very sound and rational.

This institution was introduced, not by some selfish persons for their own gain and privileges as many Westerners think, but by some spiritual leaders for the good of society and its members. Hindu society observes the method of selection in order to preserve its cultural integrity and continuity of civilization. This does not at all mean exclusiveness, but the sound spirit of assimilation and gradual upliftment. Swami Vivekananda advised the social reformers of India not to drag down the high caste persons to the lower level but to lift the unprivileged classes to the cultural status of the higher caste. This is the true Hindu spirit. The Hindu genius does not exterminate nor does it subordinate but uplifts and assimilates.

Cultural selection has also been advocated by modern Western scientists. The World's Eugenic Congress held in New York in 1932 supported this method of selection. Dr. Osborn strongly supported it. Young Darwin warned us that European culture will be destroyed if they do not adopt this method of selection soon. I am reminded of a story which shows how people ought to be a little careful to keep up their culture. A man named Martin Kellakak went to America during the Revolutionary War. He married a

feeble-minded girl in America and out of that marriage they had some children. The descendants of that man are now 480 by that feeble-minded wife. You will be shocked to hear that almost all of them are not what they should be. Many of them became abnormal in various ways, criminal, feeble-minded, insane, etc. Later this man Martin Kellakak returned to England and married a spiritual woman, a woman of culture. I think she was a Quaker. The descendants of that marriage number 496 and almost all of them are occupying very notable positions in society. In that group are lawyers, bankers, educationalists and important officials. So, after all, this cultural caste system is not bad, but what is bad is that exclusive claim for privileges and rights. The Hindus try to remove that claim by giving spiritual understanding of the oneness of life and existence in spite of apparent diversity.

We firmly believe that in a short time the Hindus will go back to their original system based on spiritual culture. History proves to us that India again and again produces personalities to introduce the needed reforms. The great spiritual leaders of India are fully active at present and indigenous reform forces are all at work.

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## PRAHLADA AND THE MODERN STUDENT

Hiranya was on his throne. His Satraps thronged the Durbar hall. There were also assembled the lords of the elements and the presiding deities of the six Seasons—a rare presence in Durbars. They have all come to take instructions from Hiranya. For the Seasons during his time came and went not according to the laws of Nature, but in obedience to the orders from the throne. The sun through fof aer Hiranya, did not shine in all his usual brilliance; but gave only a comfortable minimum of rays. The wind god was no exception ; he blew round the monarch with the mildness of a fan-wafted breeze. The earth trembled under Hiranya's heels and propitiated him by laying at his feet as offering, all the rich and luxuriant harvests it can afford. It seemed that Hiranya had even barred the entrance of death into his domain and had thus made his will the law of his empire.

Not satisfied with the control over the forces of Nature, Hiranya sought to instill into the youth of his kingdom his own Cult. For the youth, he thought, was another potential threat to his absolute power. Hiranya accordingly enforced the 'conditioning' of young minds through a system of education of his own making. In this Hiranya virtually anticipated the modern dictators who keep a complete control over the entire education. The dictators are over-conscious of the dangers to their power from the rising generation and are keen on diverting its energy into channels useful to them. In Russia children of twelve and upwards are put through a schooling where they are taught to

think that the Bolshevik way is the only correct way. The youth has no business 'to think' ; all the thinking is done on their behalf by the dictators. The youth has only to obey.

Religion that spoke of a God other than the dictators is definitely another enemy to their power. They want a religion which glorifies them as Gods. So religious institutions, Churches and other sanctums were converted into schools where the Godhood or divine infallibility of the dictators formed the main curriculum. In these Hiranya outdid the dictators. He penalised the practice of all religions that did not centre on his worship. He made the chanting of God's names punishable with death and by a fiat ordered *Hiranyaya Namah* (All glory to Hiranya) to take the place of the Lord's name everywhere. The maximum limit of the law was imposed for any violation of this order. By these Hiranya thought he has banished God and godly thoughts from all human hearts and homes.

When the time came, Hiranya's own beloved son Prahlada, whom Hiranya wanted to be the worthy successor to his throne and legacy, was sent to receive his education under the new scheme. He was put under the care of no less a person than Sukracharya, the *kulaguru* (family-teacher) of the Asuras. But unfortunately for Hiranya, his plans ran aground here itself. The fatal blow came from the most unexpected quarter.

Not many days have passed when the news came to Hiranya's ears that in spite of the best efforts of the teacher and his fellow-students,

Prahlada refused outright to chant *Hiranyaya Namah* and that the word *Narayanaya Namah* (All glory to Lord Narayana) was constantly on his lips. The monitor of the class came and related the story that at the mention of the first letter of the alphabet, *ka*, tears of ecstasy would well up in the pool-like eyes of Prahlada. Prahlada was reported to have said that the letter *ka* reminded him of the lord of his life, Krishna and he found it impossible to proceed, choked as he was by the rush of emotion. Nevertheless, Prahlada was well-versed in the Puranas and he would hold forth his class-mates on the boyish exploits of Sri Krishna. Hiranya could not bear the narration of the story any longer. He never for a moment expected that his own son would prove disloyal and refractory. He felt all his plans being crushed in his bosom. Down came his wrath in all its elemental fury on Prahlada threatening him with extreme punishment if he were to indulge any more in this gross disloyalty and disobedience of his orders. Prahlada was dismissed with an ultimatum that to continue in his blasphemous devotions to his 'lord' would be to invite calamity unto himself.

This brought Prahlada to the brink of a fiery ordeal: It was for him a problem of life and death. Whom was he to follow: His father, or the compelling call from within? He felt every heart-beat of his murmuring the blessed name, Narayana! How can he tear Him off from his heart, without tearing life itself away? There was his father ordering at the point of the sword to banish Narayana from

his heart! Was it not his duty to obey his father? But obedience to his father's words demanded that he should forget all about his God, Narayana which to him was simply impossible. Prahlada was thus torn asunder by conflicting duties and devotions and did not know what to do.

Not much time was given to him to think over the next step. Prahlada was called upon by his father to give his decision by the unqualified avowal of loyalty to Hiranya's Godhood and Cult. But Prahlada has already made up his mind otherwise. The die has been cast, as it were. He has crossed the Rubicon at last. He would stand by the lord of his life, Narayana, to his last and he expressed himself accordingly.

The result was a foregone conclusion: Prahlada was no longer Hiranya's beloved son, but his arch-enemy and his disposal was immediately ordered. Prahlada was to undergo a variety of tortures from whipping to poisoning. He was hurled from hill-tops. Mad elephants were made to walk on his tender chest. He was exposed to the fury of most venomous serpents. But lo! and behold! the boy emerged unscathed from these ordeals to the utter bewilderment of the persecutors.

\* \* \*

Hiranya was killed; but the Cult of Hiranya persists even today. The youths all over the world face the same problem as Prahlada. In every sphere of life they have to choose between King or God, between King or conscience.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Political Philosophies since 1905 : VOL II. PART II. By  
BENOY KUMAR SARKAR. PUBLISHED BY MOTILAL BANARSIDASS,  
SAID MITHA STREET, LAHORE - 1942. PAGES 570. PRICE RS. 12.

It is a really rich and stimulating repast that Dr. Sarkar provides in this volume wherein he critically reviews the economic and international forces in the socio-political thought of the last generation. The survey starts from 1905 when the new epoch of world-history was inaugurated by the birth of young Asia. The most objective fact in contemporary times, according to the author, is the growing influence of the ideas of 1905 on world-thought and culture. Among these ideas he attaches the greatest significance to the equality of East and West, the subversion of Albinoacracy or Eur-American superiority, the overthrow of the white man's burthen and the rapid triumph of the Asian Monroe doctrine, 'Asia for Asians'. In the book before us Dr. Sarkar shows how far these ideas have moulded the political philosophy, sociology, economics, politics and religion of the present day. The methodology of the work is purely objective and analytic, while the perspective adopted is that of Real politic. Among the galaxy of thinkers whose veins are analytically studied in the volume we find the names of Barker, Barnes, Becker, Boas, Brailsford, Burns, De Stefani, Dewey, Eastmann, Gini, Goetz, Hankins, Haushofer, Hobhouse, Hocking, Kohn, Laski, Lenin, Lippmann, Mannier, Moon, Piper, Sorokin, Spengler, Toynbee, Tagore and Wallas. As a work of reference and handy digest of international thought Dr. Sarkar's volumes

will be found to be highly useful. Equality in human potentialities, irrespective of differences in latitude and longitude, in bloood and tradition, is a basic postulate of the neo-liberalism which discards as idle superstition the view that the Orient is wholly different from the Occident both in outlook and capacity. Taking his stand on this fundamental ideality of mankind, Dr. Sarkar develops a theory of socio-philosophical and economico-technocratic equations, such as, (1) New Asia (1880—1896) = Modern Eur-America (1776—1832) and (2) Young India(1926—1929) = Eur-America (1848—1870). 'The fundamental features of civilisation, pragmatically considered, are the same. The differences between peoples are but differences in the stage or epoch. The equations reveal but the distinctions between earlier and later stages, between go-ahead and backward peoples. The same features are appearing today in one race or region, tomorrow in a second and the day after tomorrow in a third.' A perusal of the volume will show how 'the curves of life in the economico-political theory and practice, as manifest in the modern East are more or less similar to those in the modern West, how the Asian series run almost parallel to the Eur-American.'

The book consists of two chapters ; the first deals with Ideas and Ideals of Economic Welfare and the second with Ideas and Ideals of International Rela-tions. The former again is divided

into 3 sections dealing with (1) The period of economic depression (2) The Epoch of Economic Planning and (3) The second round of the Anglo-German War (1939— ). In the last section Dr. Sarkar dwells at some length on the immense opportunities for industrial expansion created in India by the present war economy. War, he says, is no unmixed evil. 'In all ages of history since the Mohenjodarian, indeed, since the paleolithic ages, war economy has acted as a powerful factor in the promotion of industrial and commercial life. It is war that has always been a creative agent in inventions and discoveries.....No war, no science. No war, no technocracy ; No war, no progress. No war, no civilisation.' (P. 187). The World-War I (1914—18) was a god-send to Indian industrialism. The present one also, we are assured, will prove to be a similar blessing. In spite of Britain's special efforts to favour Australia and South Africa, the exigencies of Empire defence, i.e. the pressure of World-forces, *Vishwashakti*, will force her to take India more into her confidence than she ever wants to. A danger to industrial expansion on western lines may, however, come from within. For Indians are apt to be misled by the cry that modern industrialism is undesirable, being opposed to the cultural self-respect and spiritual progress of the nation. To expose the folly of this notion Dr. Sarkar draws attention to the economic energism and materialistic trends in the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.

The second chapter on International Relations is of more than ordinary interest to the student of Indian and world-politics. It shows how again by the play of *Vishwashakti*, as manifested in the present

war, the forces of creative disequilibrium are everywhere at work to bring about a new world-order and how India, along with other subject nations of the globe, has now a great opportunity for regaining freedom. Dr. Sarkar holds that, to every subject race, war is a god-send. 'International rivalries and wars constitute the fundamental milieu and the sole possibility for the eventual emancipation of colonies and dependencies from their rulers. Peace conditions enable the rival powers to pool their interests with one another and perpetuate the *status quo* and are therefore the most detrimental to the interests and requirements of subject peoples. As soon as wars break out, the belligerents vie with one another in order to espouse the freedom of the slaves of their enemies. National freedom or statehood is thus conditioned by the international conjuncture so far as its beginnings are concerned. No war, no state. No war, no freedom. Indeed, from the earliest times until today, there is no instance of any subject race becoming politically free or semi-free without the intervention of a third power successfully overthrowing the ruling race. Nations are never made exclusively by themselves. Foreign aid is as great a necessity for a subject race attempting to acquire freedom as self-help in the form of nationalist activities.'—(P. 240.)

Poland and Czechoslovakia, in the history of the last generation, furnish striking examples of nations that gained their freedom by the help of the enemies of their masters. Such attempts of rival powers to weaken each other by inciting revolt in the opponent's camp are but an application of the old Kautilyan doctrine of sowing dissension among enemies.

Freedom thus gained, solely by alien aid, is bound to be short-lived and unstable if it is not well safeguarded from within by the strength of self-help. Too much reliance on foreign aid tends to reduce the liberated land gradually to the status of a vassal of the liberating power. These aspects of de-imperialisation to which Dr. Sarkar draws attention, are to be borne in mind while listening to the loud claims made by Japan as the self chosen apostle of the Asian Monroe Doctrine, professing to play the role of the emancipator of Asia's enslaved millions from the imperialistic domination of the white man. De-Albinisation under Japanese auspices, the author warns us, need not necessarily be de-imperialisation. 'It may not imply anything more than the replacement of white empires by Japanocracy in certain regions of Asia and Africa.' (P. 306). But the awakened peoples of young Asia, Dr. Sarkar assures us, are fully alive to the danger and convinced that Japannification or Turkification are but Asian forms of imperialism, or colonialism to which the people refuse to submit. 'Every inch of Asia is opposed to foreign rule and imperialism or colonialism, Asian or Eur-American.' (P. 332).

It is hard to do justice here to all questions of international importance dealt with in the volume with a mastery of principles and factual details that we have learnt to associate with the author. But we may not fail to mention here the brilliant study to be found in the section entitled 'The Versailles system under challenge' where Dr. Sarkar makes an incisive analysis of the philosophy of Imperialism, 'philistinism incarnate' and 'monument of hypocrisy' symbolised by what he describes as the Geneva

Complex, 'a source of demoralisation and dehumanisation on a hemispherical scale'. His observations on the future of the triangle Germany-Italy-Japan are as penetrating as they are prophetic and deserve the attention of all students of Real politic. He thinks that Japan is likely to get the help of the Axis powers only until the Versailles-Geneva system is fully avenged by them. International friendships are by no means permanent. The Axis-Japanese alliance may not be more long-standing than the earlier Anglo-Japanese or Russo-German alliances. There is already an under current of suspicion and distrust in Italy and Germany over the Japanese conquest of the priceless Pacific possessions from Eur-America: 'German-Italian conceptions of white prestige may still prevail over antipathy to Anglo-American world domination leading to the slowing down or cooling off of the genuine collaboration of Berlin and Rome with Tokyo.' (P. 395.)

We must also refer here to Dr. Sarkar's striking exposition of the meaning and implications of the Russo-German war which is reaching a crucial stage as these lines are being written. He does not view it as a subordinate phase of the Anglo-German world war, but as an independent biological conflict between two Titans whose enmity is age-long. It is a war of Russian patriotism, nationalism and imperialism against German patriotism, nationalism and imperialism. 'The present fight is but an experimental measure, designed to teach both parties as to how each should equip itself for the greater war for hegemony that is to come off in a quarter of a century. The ideological aspect of the struggle, on examination, brings out the fact that the sym-

pathies of the anti-German party i. e. Britain and America, being largely bourgeois and capitalistic, are really more with Germany than with Russia. The author thinks that a defeat will mean, under these circumstances, much more for Russia than for Germany. The end of Russian military power will bring about the end of the Soviet system in Europe. 'In the annihilation of Bolshevism as economico-political or socio-economic system, Germany will thus have served a great aim of the anti-German party. German co-operation with Anglo-America will then turn out to be profound and epoch making. The mutual enemies of World War II will therefore have to be appraised as real allies and collaborators in a deep game of world-development. Many of the friends of Soviet Russia may eventually be proven to be her real enemies.' (P. 454.)

On a previous occasion, reviewing another part of this work, we expressed the hope that the author's acquaintance with both ancient and modern sociological thought will enable him to re-interpret to the present-day world the profound doctrines of the old Hindu sages and seers. We are glad to find in the volume before us many a striking parallel drawn by Dr. Sarkar between the theories propounded by the ancient Hindu and modern Eur-American social philosophy. Thus he sees in the principles of modern Geo-Politics, as expounded by the German philosopher Haushofer, a clear confirmation of the Hindu doctrine of *Veerabhogya Vasundhara* (It is by the powerful that the earth can be enjoyed) and the dictum of Somadeva's *Nitivakyamrita* that nobody's territory is derived from his family. 'In Haushofer's general philosophy' we are

told, 'the students of Hindu political theory will encounter their Vedic doctrine of *Sahamana* (mighty) *Uttara* (superior), *abhishad* (conqueror), *Vishwashad* (world—conqueror), *Ashamasham Vishasahi* (completely conquering every region.) [Atharva Veda VII. 1. 54.] It is the same conception that found a classical shape in the Kautilyan doctrine of *Vijigishu* (aspirant to conquest) and his *Mandala* (sphere of political influence). The same doctrine was popularised in the numerous teachings on *Shakti* (power) in the *Mahabharata*'. (P.) 303. As a very useful compendium of modern economic and socio-political thought the volume must find a place in every library of social science.

—M. R. Ramaswami.

**The Promised Day is Come : By SHOGHI EFFENDI. PUBLISHED BY THE BAHĀ'I ASSEMBLY OF BOMBAY, BOMBAY. PP. 176. PRICE RS. 5/-.**

Bahaism is the outcome of the theological implications of the Shiite faith which believes in Imams endowed with superhuman wisdom, and spiritual perfection and who act as the channel of Divine grace. This recent phase of the Iranian religion has gained some ground in Turkey and Africa and has claimed adherents from among the rationalists of the West as a religion of humanity. This revivalist movement of Islam takes its name from Mirza Hosain Ali Noori who later on came to be known as Baha Ulla (1817—1892). From his early days he was known for his piety and love and in Teheran he was called the 'father of the poor'. The political colour of his Movement entailed on him repeated imprisonment. Though he never studied in any school, the knowledge and perfection manifested in him was the object of admiration

for the people of Persia. The new faith he started broke the limits of Islam and Babism and stood out as a force for the unification of the whole world into a spiritual brotherhood. Baha Ullah wrote personal messages and letters to the Rulers of Europe and Asia contemporaneous with him, having this purpose in view. Abdul Baha, his son, was appointed by him to succeed him as the head of the movement. He was followed by Shoghi Effendi as the first Guardian of the Bahai Faith in 1921, the author of the book under review.

From this background we can easily realize the nature and value of the book. For the most part the present work is a chain of citations from the utterances of Baha Ullah. A variety of typographical devices are employed in this edition of the book to give proper display to these messages. The missionary zeal with which this new faith is presented to the war-weary world is admirable. The social and spiritual principles of Bahaism are comprehensive. Fearless pursuit of Truth, recognition of the Oneness of mankind, emphasis on love and harmony as the vital principle of religions, the basic unity of all faiths,

need for a federated international order, equal rights and privilege for the sexes, work in the spirit of service, care for the needy, compulsory education and other similar nostrums can never be repeated too much. To the measure these golden principles are advanced in the lives of individuals or groups of men the Baha'i movement deserves the admiration, gratitude, support and co-operation from all.

It is a special feature of modern history that various types of universal religion or schemes for the amelioration of the entire humanity are sponsored under the dazzling names of great leaders. Any universal scheme meant to supersede another unwittingly cancels its own claims to universality. But on the other hand the readiness on the part of the adherents of any universal religion to recognize and practise the fundamental common principles wherever found, will actually help to bring about the end sought to be achieved by all such endeavours. Let us hope that the spirit of Bahaism will always recognize this. The present book deserves to be read by all who desire to get a peep into the great heart of Baha Ullah.

### A Prayer

Our Father ! as we look out upon a world in which all things seem to be shaken, we thank Thee for the assurances which come to us from the past. We praise Thee that truth crushed to earth has always risen again; and that in the long last, ruthless might has always been self-defeating and self - destructive . . . . and that though love has been crucified, dead and buried by hate, always it has come to life again. And so, we thank Thee for the lift of a long look back, and the life of a long look ahead.

— Dr. Albert G. Butzer.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Sri Ramakrishna Math & Mission

#### REPORT FOR 1941.

##### History

After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna Deva, the Prophet of the harmony of all religions, in 1866, a monastic Order bearing his name was organised by his Sannyasin disciples headed by Swami Vivekananda, which gradually set up a twofold ideal before it : To create a band of Sannyasin teachers of Vedanta, and in conjunction with the lay disciples to carry on missionary and philanthropic work, looking upon all irrespective of caste, creed or colour as veritable manifestations of the Divine. For some time the latter work was carried on through an Association called the Ramakrishna Mission Association, started by Swami Vivekananda in 1897, shortly after his return from the West. In 1899 he founded a Math or monastery at Belur, near Culcutta, to train a band of monks for self-realisation and for acquiring a capacity to serve the world in all possible ways. Soon after this the Math authorities took upon themselves the work of the Mission Association.

For the efficiency of its work and for giving it a legal status, in 1909 a Society under the name of the Ramakrishna Mission was registered under Act XXI of 1860. Its management was vested in a Governing Body consisting of the Trustees of the Belur Math for the time being. Both the Belur Math and the Ramakrishna Mission extended their sphere of activity, and had branches in different parts of the country and abroad.

##### The Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission

Though the Ramakrishna Mission and the Ramakrishna Math, with their respective branches, are distinct institutions, they are closely related. The name 'Ramakrishna Mission' is, however, loosely associated by people with all Math activities also.

The Math and the Mission own separate funds and keep separate accounts of them. The Math fund consists of subscriptions and donations from friends and devotees, and is sometimes supplemented by the sale proceeds of publications, while contri-

butions from the general public constitute the Mission fund, which is annually audited.

##### Summary of Activities

Despite the shadows of war, the activities of the Math and the Mission have shown an all-round progress, and five centres have been added. Our generous countrymen and friends abroad have also been taking a greater interest in our movement, which is recognised as one of the nation-building forces in India.

##### THE HEADQUARTERS

The Math and Mission Headquarters at Belur directed the work of the different branches all over the world, conducted a Charitable Dispensary, and did a great deal of preaching as well as most of the relief work of the Mission. Its new temple of Sri Ramakrishna is a unique edifice in northern India.

##### BRANCH CENTRES

Along with the Headquarters at Belur there were, in 1941, 38 Mission centres, 18 combined Math and Mission centres and 30 Math centres in India. These were distributed as follows : 35 in Bengal, 7 in Bihar, 4 in Assam and in Travancore, 11 in U. P. and in Madras, 3 in Mysore and in Orissa, and 1 each in Coorg, Cochin, C. P., Delhi, Punjab, Sind, Bombay and Kathiawar. In addition to these there were 2 centres in Burma, 1 in Ceylon, 1 each in Straits Settlements, Fiji, Mauritius, England, France and Argentina, and 11 centres in the United States of America. Thus there were altogether 64 Mission centres and 63 Math centres, besides 11 sub-centres run by monastic workers.

##### TYPES OF WORK

**General Service:** Most of the Math and Mission centres in India, Burma, Ceylon and the Straits Settlements conducted various activities ministering to the physical needs of the public in general, irrespective of caste, creed, colour or nationality. Typical of these are the Sevashramas in

1 & 2 Since the Japanese occupation of Burma the two centres there have been closed. The fate of the Mission in Strait Settlements is still unknown.

Rangoon, Benares and Kankhal. In 1941 there were 10 Indoor Hospitals which accommodated 14,888 patients, 58 Outdoor Dispensaries which treated 19,61,220 patients, including the Delhi T. B. Clinic, and 37 Ashramas undertaking home nursing, cremation, gratuitous relief, etc.

**Educational Work:** In 1941 there were 40 Ashramas accommodating 1314 students, 2 Colleges with 49 boys, 17 ordinary Secondary Schools and 4 Residential Secondary Schools with 4799 boys and 2703 girls, 4 Industrial Schools and 7 Vocational and Agricultural Sections attached to other schools with 645 students, 12 Middle Schools with 1390 boys and 463 girls, 63 Upper and Lower Primary Schools with 2963 boys and 839 girls, 25 Night Schools with 816 students and 3 Sanskrit Schools with 289 students. (Total: 12,245 boys and 4005 girls, in 177 institutions.) The Students' Homes at Madras and Calcutta and the educational institutions in Ceylon, Coimbatore, Madras, Cherrapunji, Belur and Deoghar illustrate the work done by the Mission. Special mention may also be made of the Industrial Schools at Madras, Belur, Sylhet and Taki.

**Work among Women:** The Mission has ever been conscious of its duties to the women of India. Typical of the work done for them are the Sisumangal Pratishthan for expectant mothers in Calcutta, the Maternity Clinic at Jalpaiguri, the women's section of the Hospital and the attached Widows' Home at Benares, the Widows' Home at Puri, the Sarada Vidyalaya in Madras, the Sister Nivedita Girls' School in Calcutta and the Sarada Mandir at Sarisha (24-Parganas). Besides, there are special arrangements for women in the other hospitals, dispensaries and schools, and some institutions are conducted particularly for them.

**Rural Uplift and Work among the Labouring and Backward Classes:** The Math and Mission have all along tried their best for serving their more unfortunate countrymen who have fallen back culturally and educationally. Permanent centres like the Ashramas in the Khasia and Jaintia Hills and at Sarisha and the Gurukula at Trichur in Cochin, have accordingly been started for helping the hill tribes, the backward classes and the village folk. Centres of this kind are responsible for conducting 123 permanent activities of various kinds,

while preaching and educative tours with magic lanterns, gramophones, etc., are also undertaken. For the labouring classes in Industrial areas the Mission conducted a good number of Night Schools and Clinics.

**Relief Work:** Relief work of various types was undertaken by the Headquarters as well as the branch centres, the most noteworthy of which were the Bengal and Malabar Cyclone Relief, the Midnapur, Sylhet and Surat Flood Relief, and the Dacca Riot Relief. The total expenditure for this work was Rs. 46,246.9.9.

**Foreign Work:** The monks of the Rama-krishna Math took upon themselves the task of carrying the message of India to distant lands, a task that had been left as a legacy by Swami Vivekananda. The various centres in North and South America, Europe and the British colonies bear ample evidence of their labour of love.

**Spiritual and Cultural:** The Math and Mission centres, particularly the former, laid special emphasis on the dissemination of the spiritual and cultural ideas and ideals of the Hindus, and through various types of activity tried to give a practical shape to the teaching of 'Sri Ramakrishna' that all religions are true. The centres established real points of contact between people of different denominations through public celebrations, meetings, classes, publications, etc. They also conducted Libraries and Reading Rooms, and a number of Sanskrit Chatushpatis. Some Math centres published books on religious subjects and six magazines in different languages. The Math centres at Mayavati, Calcutta, Madras and Nagpur, in particular, have to their credit a considerable number of useful publications. The Institute of Culture in Calcutta tried to bring together eminent men and women of India and other lands into cultural fellowship.

The total receipts of the MISSION were Rs. 14,67,269.5.9 and the total disbursements Rs. 14,33,088.11.5.

The Mission authorities take this opportunity to express their deep sense of gratitude to all those who have in various ways helped them to carry on the different activities. They also hope that the generous public all over India and abroad would continue their support and co-operation and help the Mission in carrying out the twin ideals of work and worship.

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## WOMAN IN A CHANGING WORLD

### I

In the West and following it in the East the dawn of the Industrial Era was marked by the siren call inviting one and all to a newer and wider life of 'opportunities'. The woman, absorbed though she was in the round of her domestic duties, heard the call; but first heeded not. Glancing through her window, her eyes fell on a new world opening out its ever-widening and enchanting vistas before her. It was irresistibly alluring, and so she with her taste for new glories and thrills responded. She joined the procession that was marching to the factories and to the other temples of the Industrial spirit. Her sweet hearth and home was already in the process of a transition. The solace that it has been was slowly fading into drudgery. And so it was with some relief that the woman rushed out into the open to embrace the 'new life' with gusto and to grow into the 'knowledge that her house is but a tent pitched for the night on the star-lit world-plane'. The

woman was soon to find that her new life was a charter which annulled her age-long economic dependence and ensured her the coveted equal status with man. Thus the Industrial Era gave woman, as it were, a *magna charta*, which whipped her up to a high pitch of efficiency and courage. The result was that whether in the factory or in the cock-pit, on the Bench or in the research laboratory, woman came to take her place side by side with man and play her part equally well. She turned the eyes of the world on herself, for her new role outside her home which is her 'right' place, was something which one half of the world viewed with concern and disrelish. It is worth remembering that man's distaste for the change in the status of woman was not excited merely by sentimental orthodoxy. The change was to revolutionise life and its time-honoured institutions and hence his alarm and distrust had deeper reasons. Will Durant fore-shadows the consequences of this

change in these words: '...the outstanding feature of human events in the first quarter of the twentieth century was not the Great War, nor the Russian Revolution, but the change in the status of woman. History has seldom seen so startling a transformation in so short a time. The "sacred home" that was the basis of our social order, the marriage system that was our barrier against human passion and instability, the complex moral code that lifted us from brutality to civilization and courtesy are visibly caught in that turbulent transition'.

Be that as it may, the result of it all has been the ascent of woman to an almost equal status and prominence with man. Nay, it has been an opportunity for woman to prove that mental differences between sexes are due far more to environment and occupation than to unalterable nature. Nevertheless, we have reason to get alarmed at seeing woman pushing the use of such opportunity to its logical extreme. The new and unwomanly roles which women have come to fulfil under conditions brought on by the present war, we are afraid, add to the violence of the transition Durant speaks of, and tend to twist the tender feminine in her out of shape. And what shall it profit a woman if she shall gain the whole world and forfeit her soul, the feminine. It is up to the enlightened intellectuals of to-day to help women to resist the temptation to become something other than for which they are fashioned.

In this connection it is peculiarly amusing to see how in the West, where all masculine forces seemed to conspire to keep woman confined to her hearth and home she declared her independence and struck new paths for her. There it was sought to instil in women

that a life of higher intellectual activity was not for her. Milton makes his first man console his partner, the first woman, by the words: 'To know no more, is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise'. Even when the Greeks were said to be the most civilized in the then world, they did not recognise 'the necessity of allowing freedom of development to women. Women according to Aristotle are weak of will and therefore incapable of independence of character and position.....The courage of man, he says, is shown in commanding; that of a woman in obeying..... As the poet says, 'Silence is a woman's glory'. (Aristotle's *Politics*) To Schopenhauer woman was even worse than a 'necessary evil'. In Schopenhauer Christianity and German sentimentality ran high, both being forces unsympathetic towards women. He devoutly believed in the congenital inferiority and incapacity of women. To Nietzsche everything in woman was a riddle; and he says that everything in woman hath one answer: its name is child-bearing. A sordid materialism pervades all these studies of women. We wonder how even the philosophers who are pre-eminently capable of an idealistic vision missed the higher purpose implicit in woman and have succumbed to the contagion of the popular utilitarian and materialistic view. Western culture and civilization were in their infancy then and so men can be pardoned for grudging women their due when they themselves were grabbing at it.

That, despite such opposition, women in the West forged ahead to enjoy the fruits of the 'new life' that have been jealously kept away from her speaks of something spiritual in her. But that the courage and strength born of this spiritual in her

and the opportunities given to her had not been utilised by her for her spiritual development is unfortunate. To her, life has been a means, the end being pleasure. To achieve this end she fights with her brethren and wrests from them equal rights and privileges. She has forgotten that she is the mother of man as well as of woman, and as such she has the softest corner in, and strongest hold on, men's hearts. When by spontaneous effort and by gracious conferring of right from the other side, she can get some ill righted, or reforms or extensions of privilege brought about, that she resorts to selfish agitation shows that she has lost faith in her womanhood and its subtle powers. Women in the West have increasingly come to feel shy of their womanhood. How can they then feed the springs of their being and tune life to an all-round efficiency and radiate grace and gentleness, softness and purity, which are the sovereign feminine virtues. They have lost confidence in being themselves. This has produced a morbid extrovertness which sends them a-hunting after masculine roles and positions and many more things unsuited to them. This more or less is the psychology behind their scramble for equal rights and privileges.

## II

Indian women present a totally different picture. They are proud that they are women and that they have a power in them more subtle and efficient than that of man. The spiritual conception of woman in India has naively worked to strengthen this faith. In India the Feminine is an idol of perfection, a symbol of the spirit, a daughter of Light. The Motherhood of God is India's unique contribution. The worship of Ardhana-

riswara, God and Goddess in one is India's hymn of idyllic charm to the Feminine. When the Feminine obtained such gloriously idealistic setting, it was natural that woman there must obtain a halo of light. Even from Vedic times women in India enjoyed a high prestige and freedom and was spontaneously given equal status with man. The Vedas enjoined that the man when performing the *yajna* must have his *sahadharmacharini* (lawful wife) by his side. In days of old freedom was wisely given by man to woman and wisely enjoyed by her. It stands to the undying glory of Indian woman that such grant of freedom was never utilised for lower ends, but was ever used for her spiritual development. Such freedom made the spiritual blossoming of woman in ancient India possible. As saint, wife, daughter or disciple, if Indian woman has been resourceful and inspired and if she has risen to the pitch of super-human efficiency, it is due to her judicious use of her freedom and her abounding faith in the feminine. The mystic grandeur of Mira's sainthood can perhaps be equalled only by austere eminences like Padmini of Chitore, Chand Bibi or the Rani of Jhansi, whose faith in themselves made them the stalwart sentinels that they were, of their own honour and their country's cause. If we deem that it is in wifedom that woman shines brightest, then there is Sati, Savitri and the ever-glorious Sita. If it is maidenhood, then there is Uma. And where, in all the womanhood of the world, shall be found another as grand as Gandhari? All these were great because they were women first and then anything else.

Speaking of what really contributed to the greatness of Indian women luminaries, Sister Nivedita writes:

'Sita and Savitri were great in wifehood, only as the fruit of that antecedent fact, that they were great women. Perfect wives as they were, if they had never been married at all, they must have been perfect just the same, as daughters, sisters, and disciples. This *efficiency* (italics ours) to all circumstances of life this womanhood before wifehood, and humanity before womanhood, is something at which the education of the girl must aim in every age.' An education as the one that is in vogue to-day which ends in the amassing of information cannot make for such efficiency. It must be an education for life, with its maximum emphasis on character. On this point India speaks with no uncertain voice : 'Granted', she says in effect, 'that a more arduous range of mental equipment is now required by women, it is nevertheless better to fail in the acquisition of this, than to fail in the more essential demand, made by the old type of training in character. An education of the brain that uprooted humility and took away tenderness, would be no education at all to women. All education worth having must first devote itself to the developing and consolidating of character and only secondarily concern itself with intellectual accomplishment.' And for a woman consolidation of character should also mean the cultivation of feminine virtues, of grace and sweetness, gentleness and piety, tolerance and childlike love and pity. It would be a tragedy if these virtues were discarded in favour of the crude product of western information and social aggressiveness.

Such consolidation of character alone can tune woman's life to an all-round competency and bring about a spiritual efficiency that will answer all moments of crisis. The spiritual

sources of Indian social life nurtured such efficiency in woman. To what else can we ascribe the austere and saintly radiance round the lives of Sita or Savitri. One may feel inclined to question the spiritual quality of Sita's character, wife as she was. But to doubt the spiritual in Sita would be to forget the great truth that in India the social life derives its sanction and sustenance from the super-social ascetic life. In India the wife is to be loved not for the sake of the wife, but for the *atman* (spirit) in her. Sita and Savitri were wives, but they were saints also, even as the women saints and the Brahnavadinis of the Vedic age were mothers of mankind. The most modern of such women who combined in themselves sainthood and spiritual motherhood is Sri Sarada Devi, the divine consort and complement of Sri Ramakrishna. What the women saints and ideal wives of Hindu tradition fulfilled in the former centuries, Sri Sarada Devi fulfils in the twentieth. The loftiest and noblest function of man is to afford the spiritual solace. The Holy Mother, as Sri Sarada is more popularly known, by her spiritual ministry, proved woman's efficiency for that supreme task and thus raised womanhood to the pitch of man's preponderating dignity.

This month on the 29th instant the Holy Mother's devotees and admirers in various parts of the world will celebrate her 89th birthday. They will remember with profit that she came to fulfil the great promise, implicit in India's worship of perfection as and in the Feminine, to validate once again the motherhood of God. She stands as the monument of faith in the feminine and her life will ever radiate supreme courage and strength born of such faith.

For some time in the past the women in the West and after them their sisters in the East were being steadily overcome by a shyness of their womanhood. This started them on a search after masculine roles. Such careers necessitate the shedding of feminine virtues, virtues of grace and sweetness, of gentleness and piety, of holiness, of childlike depth of love and pity, the precious and unique ornaments of women. The war and the new unwomanly roles the modern women are fulfilling to-day are not only smothering the womanly virtues in her, but making her hard and rough. Having come in daily contact with the roughness and the cruelty of war, we are afraid, the woman will emerge after the war, shorn of her gentle instincts and softness, nay, devoid of her maternal instincts even, perhaps a sadistic being. Such emergence would be nothing short of a calamity and it is up to the enlightened women and men of the generation to avert such catastrophe.

Let the woman realise that there are treasures in her nature which none else can offer and which can afford the most needed solace to a war-weary world. Her sweetness and gentleness are needed to nurse the bleeding wounds of humanity, her comforting words for humanity's aching heart. The true woman is the greatest need of the hour. In this changing world, it would be

fatal if woman takes it into her head that she should also change. For, change for her must mean a departure from her real nature, her native grace and sweetness. If Indian women can say that they have not changed and that they shall not, they stand to win rare laurels to themselves and to their country. In the words of the poet:

What does our country need ? Not  
armies standing  
With sabres gleaming ready for the  
fight.

\* \* \*

But we want women, strong of soul  
yet lowly,  
With rare meekness, born of  
gentleness,  
Women whose lives are pure and  
clean and holy,

\* \* \*

Women who hold the names of wife  
and mother  
Far nobler than the title of a  
Queen.

\* \* \*

Women who do not hold the gift of  
beauty  
As some rare treasure to be bought  
and sold,  
But guard it as a precious aid  
to duty.

\* \* \*

While their pure prayers like  
incense are ascending ;  
These are our country's pride, our  
country's need.

## THE CHRIST WHO LIVES IN ME

(Contributed)

'The Christ who lives in me' is an incommensurable quantity, or rather quality. But distinctions are necessary to define, and to this no exception can be taken. In the first instance I should say that I do not regard Western civilisation as Christianity. Nay, I hold that it has a life of its own running apart from, and even contrary to it. There may be seen in it some elements of Christianity, but it is a thing that is historical and of the soil and soul of the West. I owe no allegiance to it in the name of Christ. Secondly, even the various historical forms of Christianity are not identical with the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. At the best they are reactions of the human soul to His voice, and at the worst they are revolts against His mind. The many forms of Western Christianity now in India and called churches will be superseded and surpassed by Indians who, while recognising kinship in the matters of the *atman* with the devout *bhaktas* of the West, will appeal direct to the living Spirit of the Lord who is today what He was in the days of His flesh. He speaks now and here to us as He spoke then and there to them. This is the dominant Truth : and if it is not true, then there is no Truth in Christianity. Above the witness of traditions and institutions, there is the Lord who calls men to Himself and leads them to the heavenly places. I should not like to use even the word Christianity, for Christianity is not even a religion nor even the Religion, as some of its adherents have tried to distinguish it. I regard it as the Pure Act and movement of God. Man can add nothing

to it nor take anything from it. It cannot be dissolved in the stream of historical cultures and dogmas, nor manipulated and managed by priests and pieties.

### *He Comes as and when He Wills*

The norm of the Word of God is found in the witness of the New Testament. But behind this written witness is the Eternal Word. Even the New Testament is not the Lord of the human soul any more than the John the Baptiser, who pointed to the Lord, was that Light. He was a burning and shining light and gave witness to the Light. Here emerges what I consider to be the function of the Christian *Guru*. He can never come between the Lord and ourselves. He can never reveal the Lord to us. The Lord alone meets man in the intimacy and privacy of His presence. No human logic, rational or emotional, can bring Him to us. He comes as and when He wills, even as He came to His disciples beside the Syrian Sea and in the fields and villages of His land. Our faith in Him does not proceed from man, nor even from the mystic depths of our *atman* but from Him who is the author and finisher of it. Yet the New Testament witness has been authenticated by the experience of Christian *bhaktas* all down the ages, and it forms an array of the nearest witnesses to the Lord, the Lord Himself as the Spirit witnessing within us. His witness is true, certain and infallible, and no one who has once heard it can doubt it. 'My sheep heareth my voice, and I lead it unto living fountains of water.'

### *The Mystery Round Christ's Life*

There is a mystery surrounding Christ's life in the world that all the historical insight of the last century and the present has not penetrated. It is the mystery of the Incarnation of the Eternal Word of God. Albert Switzer (?) in *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, a work of wonderful interest, gave a thrilling account of the giant efforts of the profoundest minds of Germany to elucidate this mystery, but as he says they have all ended in tragic failure. Many and varying pictures have been given of Him. The collective merit of them all is that they have destroyed each other. He has been variously described as a revolutionary, a Bolshevik, a liberal theologian, and above all that jejune thing, a mild prophet preaching the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man,—a doctrine that no one would dream of disputing till it is put or attempted to be put into practice. The last phase of historical criticism was to emphasise the apocalyptic or eschatological aspects in His life and teaching. That is, He believed in the immanence of what He called the Kingdom of God and that He was to be the king under God of this order, and that ultimately He concluded, after the first glow of enthusiasm had waned and the world turned its back on Him, that His death was necessary for the coming of the Kingdom. Thus He courted death and was crucified amidst poignant scenes of shame and sin. This Kingdom of God, let us bear in mind, the warning of the eschatologists, is not a moral reformation, for of moral or even soul-reformation there is not a word in the New Testament. It is the supernatural and transcendent order of God, displacing

the present order, both physical and spiritual. It is not the consummation of the world process, or involution into the *Brahman*. But it is the reversal of the world-order and the coming of that order for man and creation as existing in the mind of God. Let it be understood that it is not individual salvation or emancipation, though it is included in it as part in the whole.

### *Christ ceased to live, but began to Live*

What became of this colossal ambition of Jesus, the very reverse of the Victorian evolutionary process? Nothing and everything, according to Middleton Murry who in his *Jesus* has made an attempt in choice oration to anglicise the German learning. Jesus made two mistakes; all honour and glory be to Him! He believed in God as His Father and not merely as our Father, and that He was the Son, not a Son, of God who was destined to usher in the Kingdom of God. Both these postulates were pulverised on the rock of fact. But what of it? Jesus as the noblest of humanity as loving men as none else before Him or since, has become the type of a new humanity, or a new meta-biological variation, as he calls it. But we all, if we have an eye to factual realities, see that this will not do. Once again there has been failure to account for the rise of the Christian consciousness of Jesus as Lord that the New Testament embodies. The death of Jesus on the cross ought, by every known rule of historical evolution, to have made an end of Jesus except leaving a rightful feeling in the memories of His disciples as of a last attempt to realise the Unknown. According to some superfine scholars, He taught nothing original, nothing

that had not been better said by others before and since, though a few things like the 'Parable of the Prodigal' would repudiate such a suggestion with a pitying smile. But anyhow there was an end. The grave was there outside Jerusalem. But it did not end; rather it was the beginning. Jesus ceased to live, as His enemies desired, but He began to live. In the New Testament it is said that the grave could not hold Him and the Holy One could not see corruption. That does not mean the commonplace doctrine that His soul could not die. The Resurrection, as it is called in the New Testament, is the coming out of Jesus in His totality, though mysteriously transformed and transfigured, from death. It is His conquest over death, not merely as a physical catastrophe, but death as the general law of human life and history. It is bursting of Eternity into time, of the Life of God into death. I shall not linger on the implications of it and the issues that have been joined over this problem of the Resurrection of Jesus. St. Paul's summing up is true today as then. If Christ be not risen (not spiritually in our hearts, though that is involved in it), then our faith.

### *Where Religion Ends, there Jesus begins His work.*

(i) What, then, is this faith that the Christian holds, rather holds the Christian in its firm grasp? In the first place and most emphatically, it is not a philosophical deduction, nor an unfolding of our human energies, whether in the conscious or unconscious region. This faith is not a catalogue of beliefs. Founded on the Word of God, it comes from Him and returns to Him. The certainty of this faith is the authority of God.

All else founded on human history and even on church authority rests on frail foundations like the house built on sand. The rain will come, and the floods beat upon it, and it will fall, and great will be the fall thereof.

(ii) This is not religion even on the highest plane, for by religion or the law, as St. Paul calls it, no man shall see the salvation of God. It ministers to human pride and is mere humanism. Where religion ends, there God in Christ Jesus begins His work.

(iii) When the Holy Spirit of God who comes from God the Father and His Son in glory begins His process in the individual, the disease in him rages, becomes complicated. The fever of delirium sets in and continues. This is what is called 'sin' in the New Testament in all its length and breadth and depth. It is the sum total of the infinite contradictions in which man exists and out of which he seeks escape but in vain. This is a necessary first stage that is reached by religion. Man has reached the end and his way is barred. Einstein says, unlike what used to be said about space being infinite, that space is finite, but unbounded. But man fancies this to be a state of freedom but the misery of it dawns, alas, not always on man, and the crisis is reached in the cry, 'What shall I do to be saved?' Even then, as we see when he lies on his back drifting amidst the waves, he wants to do something for his freedom from this curse and bondage or *bandham* as the Saiva Tamilian thinkers have aptly called it. To such a tortured soul death comes as a welcome relief when he dies on the cross of Jesus Christ. Now let us see what this means.

*Where the Light is as Darkness*

(iv) The cross or the Crucifixion of the Blessed One is regarded more often than not as an act of self-sacrifice, as *tyagam*. And so it is but in a sense the depths of which have not yet been plumbed by the most daring saints of the Christian *sangham*. In Christian experience, as in that of Paul and Francis, we see tense souls entering into that dark and shadowy realm of the Passion of the Lord where, to use the language of Holy Scripture, the light is as darkness. I shall not here discuss the cross as an event in past history, whether He was condemned for treason against Rome or blasphemy, making Himself the Son of God, and whether the forms of Roman procedure were complied with. Matters of antiquarian interest these all. Nor shall I describe the drama of the cross, for without conscious art the Gospel authors described the Death; and it has come out as a perfect creation of art. To use the canon of Aristotle, it was a tragedy elevating the soul of the beholder and purifying the passions, the *Katharsis*, as the old Greeks would have called it. This pictorial representation, as St. Paul calls it, is good but it is the imagination that is active and actualises the past in all its poignant features. And yet strange it is that the New Testament rarely dwells on these, the human interest and the dramatic possibilities, but on its divine significance. It is not merely regarded as an event in history but the movement and act of God for reconciling a hostile world unto Himself in the Death of Jesus. When the individual man of whom I spoke a little while before is drawn to the cross, he dies with the Lord on that

instrument of a shameful death. 'I am crucified with Christ,' cries St. Paul. What does this tremendous assertion mean? Is it a mere rhetorical exaggeration, or fervid fancy? It means the hostile self, the ego of sin in the misery of its self-bondage, receives its death-blow on the cross in the identification in faith with His death. This identification is faith and this faith is the Revelation of God. This is the meaning of faith in the New Testament and that which is involved in opposing it to reason.

*Christ died for His Enemies*

The cross is thus the challenge of God to the human, its halt and judgment by Him. In this crisis that literally means judgment, the sentence of death is passed and accepted. But with the submission there arises the justification,—man's acceptance with God. Man is imprisoned, as Paul would put it, and this faith comes from God to despairing man and sets him free. This is the faith, the mystery of godliness, the manifestation of God in the flesh and the acceptance of the ungodly and the sinner. While we were yet sinners in all our deep degradation, Christ died for the ungodly. He died, mark you, for the ungodly, for His enemies, and not for the saints and the righteous. Thus, I am dead and buried with Him. The silence and darkness of the grave brood over this.

*The Spiritual Significance of Resurrection*

(v) Beyond the mystery of the Death of the Lord is another mystery, His Resurrection,—not His soul's survival but Himself, His whole Personality. On this matter of the Resurrection has raged the fiercest controversy, but the fort stands not-

withstanding the most profound assaults of historical criticism. I shall not here pause to discuss the arguments that have led me to an unshakable belief in this. But above what is called the fact of the Resurrection, rather in it, lies a matter of first-rate moment. That is : the Resurrection is the origin of the extraordinary spiritual power, including every other dynamic, that is at the back of the Christian movements in history, and of the new life of the Christian. As this is a force not generated by human events, but it is God, as the New Testament says, or the Holy Spirit who was in Jesus that raised Him from the tomb where his broken body lay. And as He was raised from the dead, even so the Christian who joins himself to Him is raised from the grave of his old self to newness of life. Everywhere in the pages of the New Testament is this evident, not as a speculation of theology but as an indubitable fact of the experience of Christians. That is, the Christian, after passing through the cross the distinction of his old life in the flesh with all its attendant miseries and sins and illusions, emerges into the new life, rather the new life of Christ takes possession of him. Thereafter, as Puts put it, it is not I that live but Christ lives in me. This is not to be imagined as the inner evolution of the soul, the emergence of the deeper self in man or as any other kind of mysticism. It is not even some kind of cosmic consciousness. It is in verity a participation in the glorified life of the Risen Lord who, having lived in the flesh as a historical Figure amidst the tragic and turbid stream of life as we know it, has been exalted to the majesty on High, as it is called in the New Testament. To this fourth dimensional or heavenly life

is the Christian also raised by the same Power, the power of God, the miracle of miracles, coming from beyond the line of our mortality, beyond this world of *Maya*. It is a new creation just as truly as Adam was. And so Jesus is called the Second Adam, the life-giving soul, the giver of Eternal Life to as many as received Him.

### *The True Christian Life*

After this, it is not to be supposed that the Christian has to fold his hands and sleep. In the Christian life there is no *finale*, though there is a beginning when the crisis is passed. This is because the redeemed soul lives between two ages, between the past which was the world of human contingency, the flesh as it is called, and the coming, the age of the Christ. The former is gone, the night ; and the latter, the dawn, is coming. And so the soul experiences the tension of the transition. It calls for struggle, alertness and suffering. The Christian life, though in its inner depths, is one of joy and peace in the Holy Spirit, it is on the surface convulsed by the waves of human life, now rolling placidly and then agitated by fierce storms. In the midst of this, toiling and rejoicing the Christian goes in the faith of the cross and His Resurrection force,—the mightiest in all the world. Thus there is no escape into an artificial solitude, and no seclusion, except for seasons and periods of reflection and recollection. But he knows that the world and its fashion is passing away. The reign of Christ, the transcendent Kingdom of God, not as the salvation of the individual soul, is coming and is come. Let Thy Kingdom—this faith containing the eternal hope, and filled with the greatest of all, love, rise like a

fountain day and night. The seer, a prisoner for the Lord, as St. John was in the island of Patmos, saw the new heavens and the new earth, the new Jerusalem descending like a bride adorned for the bridegroom. In it

there shall be no more sorrows caused by sin and no more death, its wages, but the Lord shall be the sun and moon ; and the Christian who has joined to Him shall behold in undimmed radiance the Beloved Face.

## WHITHER ARE WE GOING?

*By P. S. Naidu, M.A.*

There rests on the intellectuals of the present day the very serious responsibility of viewing the present world-conflict from an objective, dispassionate and selfless standpoint, and of suggesting the ways and means for resolving the conflict. Such a viewpoint is difficult to maintain for any considerable time because each one of us is caught up inextricably in the huge whirlpool of the conflict. We cannot describe it or assess its value impersonally. Yet, it is exactly this impersonal attitude that must be achieved and maintained by the scientific student of human affairs. When we somehow manage to secure this much-valued attitude, even though it be only for a short while, then we are impressed with the 'uncertainty concerning the future of the human race. Human civilisation appears to be in illusion, and our destiny is becoming increasingly dark and uncertain'. What are the causes for the wide-spread degradation of human nature that we are witnessing now, and what remedies do we suggest for arresting this downward career of our race ? These are questions that face the intellectuals and they must be answered here and now.

When we examine the structure of our civilisation dispassionately, we find that rot has set in at three im-

portant centres of organisation of the human race. Family life, national spirit, and religious faith are in the process of disintegration. These institutions which sheltered man and gave him a sense of security in this world, and inspired him with hope for a comfortable life in the future world are disappearing. Unable to bear the weight of desolation within, man tries to divert his mind by engaging in wars and revolutions. But sooner or later he must face the blankness within himself—and, then will come the final crash !

Well-meaning efforts at a diagnosis of the cause of world-ills have been made by politicians and statesmen, but they have resulted in failure because they do not touch even the fringe of the problem. The solutions offered deal only with the outward manifestations of the inner causes. Social and political institutions are in the last analysis found to be products of man's behaviour. Economists, historians and politicians try to explain man's behaviour in terms of external factors. But behaviour is the outward expression of the inner organisation of man's mind, and the only science which is competent to deal with mental organisation is contemporary psychology. Hence a psychological diagnosis of the root

causes of man's degeneration should be attempted at once.

Even at the risk of causing annoyance to some, let us say with all the emphasis at our command that the resolution of the world conflict in terms of the so-called 'economic forces' is utterly futile, because these forces are abstract and static. It is the human motive behind human behaviour that is the most potent factor in controlling world movements. Any explanation of behaviour which loses sight of the motive forces inside the human mind is inadequate and incomplete. These forces have been neglected by the vast majority of the students of human affairs, and so no solution to the burning problems of the day has been forthcoming.

## II

We have noted already that psychology is the only science that can deal successfully with the thorny problems of our day. At the present moment there are two leading psychological schools whose aid is most valuable to us in analysing the components of human behaviour. These are the *Hormic* and the *Psycho-analytic* schools. Both are purposivistic, that is, both view human action as being motivated, and both deal with the dynamics of mental organisation. They teach us that man is a creature of instincts, and that his apparently rational and civilised behaviour rests on a foundation of elemental instincts. These fundamental instincts get organised into 'sentiments' of various levels of complexity. Thereafter they are arranged in an ascending scale of values with a master sentiment of supreme value at the top. The sentiments are the immediate cause of man's behaviour, and it is with the dynamics of sentiment organisation

that the two psychological schools mentioned above are mainly concerned. Hormic psychology deals with the conscious levels of mental dynamics, while psycho-analysis deals with the unconscious levels, and between them they cover the whole field of human motivation. He who is engaged in the study of human affairs may never hope for success unless he has a working knowledge of the driving forces controlling the human mind.

## III

Let us now apply the principles of purposivistic psychology to the elucidation of the causes making for rot in human affairs. It has been noted already that the institution of the human family is in the process of deterioration. The family is perhaps one of the oldest human institutions. Its influence in shaping the destinies of mankind has been recognised by anthropologists, and sociologists. The family has been the nucleus around which other great human institutions, such as the state and the church, were organised. It has stood the test of time, but at the present moment it seems to be breaking up under the onslaughts of modern civilisation. In many foreign countries there is a drift towards a life of separation. Where there is any co-living at all, it is without many of the important aspects of family life. If the extent of divorce is any indication of the failure of family life, then we may take it that this hoary institution is on the verge of complete extinction. We need mention only one more fact to complete this gloomy picture of the dissolution of the family, namely, the wide-spread practice of contraception by civilised men and women.

It is quite easy to explain away this phenomenon as due to 'economic

causes'. The 'Industrial Era' (The blessed word which is used to cover up all sins!) in which we are supposed to live is believed to have taken away much of the lure of family life. There is a general increase, it is said, in the standard of living, and as both sexes are eligible for service, men and women prefer to lead independent and untrammeled lives. All these statements may be true, but they describe only the outward symptoms of deep seated mental disturbances. No one has attempted to analyse the dynamics of organisation which has resulted in such widespread disruption of the institution of the family. Let us now undertake the task of psychological analysis.

When, as hormic psychologists, we look into the foundation of the two allied institutions — the human family and the sacrament of marriage — we find that two major drives are the fundamental components of the sentiments which have generated them. These are SEX and REPRODUCTION. In the earlier stages of evolution these two were merged into each other so completely that there was only one impulse activating both of them. But now they are breaking up into two distinct instinctive impulses, each in partial antagonism to the other. Anthropologists have given us enough evidence to bear out this conclusion. There are women who hate the sight of men, but are willing to go through the excruciating tortures of childbirth in order to have children of their own. 'Test-tube babies' have been invented to satisfy the cravings of these women. In their case sex-love has atrophied, while reproduction is very strong. As against these we find innumerable men and women who desire passionately all the

enjoyments of romantic love, but are unwilling to suffer the consequences of bringing children into the world. Sex-lust rules their mind, while the reproductive instinct is dead in them. Contraception is the friend and ally of these irresponsible lovers.

Man's mind is merely a bundle of instincts. That the instincts which control the destinies of man as inexorably as fate have evolved from one or two fundamental and primal instincts goes without saying. And it but stands to reason that evolution should proceed further by causing each instinct to split up into two and then these two into four and so forth. It is no wonder that sex and reproduction are in the process of getting divorced from each other.

Let us now digress for a while and examine the evidence that comes to us from the allied field of biology. In the scale of vertebrate evolution birds occupy an earlier stage, mammals a later, and the anthropoid apes and man the latest stages. Among birds a single passage the cloaca, serves all the purposes of defecation and reproduction.

Among mammals and men a complete differentiation of the single outlet into two has taken place, and let it be noted that in the female the differentiation has gone further than in the male, there being three outlets, two for throwing out waste products and one for receiving the male germ. We may now ask reasonably—what prevents nature from proceeding further and evolving out of the last passage, one for reproduction without any sex-lust, and the other for sex gratification without any reproductive function? This is exactly what is happening at present. Evidence gathered from the field of abnormal psychology supports our view. So,

on the bodily as well as the mental side sex is differentiating into sex without reproduction, and reproduction without sex. Nature is going ahead with the process of evolution, and the question for us is, can we so guide this process of evolution that will make for human welfare?

Before we can give an adequate answer to the question raised above we should take note of certain significant biological facts. Evolution is not a pre-destined or fore-ordained process. Nature is not working out some pre-destined plan of her own. The great biologist Lamarck has shown us the significant role of *effort* in biological evolution. Effort guides evolution, and effort is *mental* in essence. A powerful need, a strong desire in the mind, these give rise to effort, and this effort ultimately gives birth to a new organ for the satisfaction of the new need. Following in the wake of Lamarck, Bergson has shown that the future of evolution is a creation of the present collective will of the organisms whose organs are evolving. When we take these biological facts into consideration we can unhesitatingly assert that the future of human evolution can be controlled by the present generation of men and women. How and in what direction should such evolution be guided?

War, famine and pestilence and all the ills that human flesh is heir to may be traced ultimately to one root cause, namely, over-population, and this in its turn is the direct offshoot of the human institution of marriage rooted in sex. Man is not courageous enough to face the fact that marriage rests on two of the fiercest human instincts, sex-lust and acquisitiveness. Man has claimed proprietary right not

only over his earthly goods, but also on the bodies of his mate and offspring, and now woman is putting forth a reciprocal claim. These instincts can never be satisfied. They grow in volume and intensity in proportion to the measure they receive satisfaction. Some measure of restraint was imposed on them through the institution of the family, for man was made responsible for the fruits of his self-indulgence. At the present day a serious situation has arisen because, through contraception man has discovered the means for unbridled self-indulgence. Under these conditions are we to accept the scheme offered by the ultra-modern economist for making every man 'produce according to his ability and enjoy according to his needs'? This solution will only plunge man into greater and newer forms of misery, because desire can never be allayed by satisfying it. It will only grow more and more fierce with every opportunity for satisfaction that it gets.

We have already noted the fact that the future of evolution is controlled by desires of the present generation. Men and women of the present generation are moved so fiercely by their self-created desires for earthly enjoyment and earthly possessions that nature may very well yield to them for a while, and dazzle them with the mirage of new avenues of satisfaction. The family may break up and wedlock may crumble away in order that sex-lust may have full sway over the human mind. The institution of private property may disappear. But at the end there will be a terrible toll to pay. Not along this road lies the road to human welfare. It is in an entirely different direction that we should guide the course of

human evolution. It is not through multiplication of our needs, but through their simplification and final annihilation; it is not through increase in the number of our instinctive tendencies, but through their decrease and final destruction that we can ever hope to achieve our salvation. The present moment is very critical in the stage of human evolution. If the collective will of man desires to add to the battery of instinct then nature may co-operate with man and evolve ever new and fiercer instincts and the bodily organs necessary for their functioning. But that way lies our doom and destruction. If, on the other hand, the human race is courageous enough to exercise sufficient control and will the extinction of the fierce sex instinct, then again nature will help man by causing first the atrophy and then the final extinction of the organs functioning in the service of the dread impulse.

So, as a first conclusion we state that the root cause of all our ills is the sex instinct with its chief abettor, acquisitiveness. This instinct is in the process of differentiating into sex-lust and reproduction. Left to itself it will debase man and make him more and more a slave of earthly desires and attachment. If man is to be saved, sex should be killed and rooted out of his mind. Extinction of desire and the practice of non-attachment to this world are the means for achieving this end. Western psychology and philosophy are not in a position to help us, because they deal with the levels of mind which are at and below consciousness. Hindu psychology alone deals with the super-conscious level. And the way of escape which this psychology prescribes for us is clearly laid down in Advaita Vedanta. The

practice of Vedantic principles in our daily life is, therefore, indicated as the only solution for the thorny problems which are hedging in man's life all round at the present day.

#### IV

The second human institution which is in the melting pot at this critical time is 'NATIONALISM'. Like the family, this institution too is rooted in one of the fiercest instincts, namely acquisitiveness, and its attendant sentiment of hatred. Here again it is worth our while taking certain significant biological facts into consideration. Nature, in the first instance, clustered huge masses of cells together and produced enormous mammoths and dinosaurs which ravaged the earth and became an intolerable menace to the very existence of other living creatures. Thereupon nature eliminated these creatures by causing the extinction of the species through mutual destruction. Instead of massing huge volumes of living flesh together to produce a single organism, nature hit upon the plan of massing together individual minds in the hope that through co-operation and self-sacrifice human society would move along the right lines. It remains to be seen what exactly is going to be the result of this new experiment of nature.

Let us elaborate this idea. Sociologists and anthropologists tell us that men and women who formed the members of the family unit felt the need for coming together in larger numbers for certain common purposes. Families were then knit together into tribes, and tribes into races, and nations, till in recent times the rapid progress of communications between country and country, and mutual economic dependence of several countries brought nations together and

gave us hopes of the birth of a world state. The League of Nations was an index of what was happening in the evolution of the nation-state into the world-state. But, just as in the case of the family, deterioration has set in at the most critical stage of evolution. In this case there is a clear regression to a more primitive state of exclusiveness. Instead of going ahead to the stage of complete unification, man is going back to the primeval state of individual aggression. What can we do to save man from himself?

We have suggested that in the evolution of human institutions a grand new strategic movement was being adopted by nature for her own ends. Massing of cells in a single body having failed to produce the desired result, massing of minds was tried. In the family the individualistic and separativistic instincts were allowed free play. At the same time, to check them and keep them within decent limits, the unifying and binding instinct of gregariousness had to be stressed. For this purpose families were brought together to form the nation. Inside the 'nation' man learnt to subdue the ego-instincts, and if the nations had evolved into one big nation then evolution would have gone along right lines. But man interfered with the strategy of nature by stressing inside the nation just those instincts which make for disruption and destruction. Collective acquisitiveness was emphasised under the guise of national prosperity, national welfare, living space and such other catch phrases. Hatred of the foreigner became a fierce passion, and was raised to the status of a virtue under the dangerous cloak of patriotism. What was denied man as an individual was permitted to him as a member of the nation, and every in-

dividual vice could now be indulged in under the pretence of serving the nation.

It is no wonder then that the national spirit is leading men to destruction. Nature brought men and women together in the family, and families together into nations, in the hope that men and women would learn to discipline themselves. Man, however, has the power to interfere with nature, and he has used this power to turn the family into an institution for self-indulgence, the marriage sacrament into licensed prostitution and the nation into a channel for the uncontrolled exercise of greed, lust, hatred and collective plunder. But nature will triumph in the end. If man goes the way he is now going, nature will as surely eliminate him from the surface of the earth as she has already eliminated the pre-historic monsters. The insects alone will be the sole surviving creatures on earth.

To stave off this disaster, and to arrest the rot that has set in at the second centre of human organisation, there should be, in the first place a complete overhauling of the mental structure which expresses itself in many bizarre forms of nationalism. The master-sentiment which governs Western nations is self-regard. It is national self-regard that keeps individuals and nations rigorously apart. The West speaks boastfully of its team-spirit, its esprit-de-corps, its club-life, etc. But all these pseudo-virtues masquerading in the garb of national virtues reduce themselves in the last analysis to fierce self-regard rooted in attachment to things earthly. As in the case of the family, so also in the case of the nation it is attachment to worldly possessions that is responsible for all the ills of the present. The remedy lies in

replacing self-regard by BRAHMAN-REGARD. Non-attachment, self-control leading to self-effacement and renunciation, all on a nationwide scale are indicated as the only means for ending the present deadlock. Unless nations renounce all their attachment to national interests and come together in one single world state, there is no salvation either for individuals or nations.

## V

In many Western countries and a few Eastern ones too religion has ceased to be a factor that counts in man's life at the present day. The blame for this state of affairs is laid at the doors of religion herself. Before we tackle this problem we should note that religion is different from religiosity, religious ceremonial, organised religion or churchianity. These are of man's making and are bound to follow man's fortunes in other departments of his life. Consequently they are, along with other institutions created by man, under a heavy cloud of suspicion now. The psychologist, the psycho-analyst in particular, has laid bare the foundations of these pseudo-religious institutions. He has shown us how they have sprung from some of the fiercest of animal instincts in man. Sex-lust and acquisitiveness are once again found to be at the bottom of all organised religion and religious institutions. It is this type of religion that has fallen into disrepute at the present day.

The psychological analysis of religion shows clearly that man has hindered, as in the case of the family and the nation, nature's efforts to improve mankind. Man has created for himself and in himself greater and greater attachment to this world. Reverence, awe, gratitude

and such other religious sentiment have as their most essential ingredient the impulse of 'submission'. This is one of the most primitive impulses, and demands the presence of 'assertion' in a superior individual for its proper functioning. The instinct of submission has been exploited by pseudo-religious leaders for their own purposes ; and as these leaders had to exercise assertion, they ended by degrading themselves as well as their flock through forging fetters of attachment to this earth. Nature implanted submission in man's mind so that he may rise to higher levels, but man has once again interfered with nature by turning this instinct into a means for earthly gain. Luckily for man there is another impulse — sympathy, both active and passive — which lies dormant and may be awakened under suitable conditions. Through the proper activation of this impulse man can rise to the greatest Advaitic heights, and achieve the complete annihilation of all the instinctive impulses.

Disintegration of religion at the present moment is merely symptomatic of nature's protest against man's misuse of natural propensities for creating earthly attachments. Religiosity and pseudo-religious piety which fan the flame of passion should go, and it is against their rule over the mind of man that the unconscious is protesting at present. But there is also the danger of throwing the baby away with the bath water. Religious reform may take easily the very deceptive form of humanism, and forge for man heavier and stronger shackles for keeping him in subjugation to earthly desires. The reaction to undesirable religiosity, may, as in the case of communist countries, easily end in the destruction of all

religion. It is against such a tendency that we should be on our guard today.

The only remedy, once again, is to be found in the highest form of Advaitism. Advaita Vedanta offers to us the only hope of salvation.

## VI

We may now sum up our conclusion in the following words :

We are now living in an age of transition, an age in which the critical spirit of man has risen in rebellion against the irrational restriction imposed upon it. Old values are being put upon their trial, and many of them are being uprooted and thrown out. Three great human institutions, the family, the nation and the church are in the process of disintegration. It is hoped that man will soon climb out of this 'valley of death' into

sweet and refreshing light. But signs are not wanting to indicate that a gloomier and more dreadful type of mediaevalism than what man has ever before experienced is about to envelop him. The regress to a primitive state of life and thought seems to be imminent. In the face of these facts it is quite easy to take a complacent attitude and speak of the lesson which history has to teach us. Has not man emerged triumphant from similar crises in the past? True, man has emerged triumphant, only to sink again as he is now sinking, into chaos and misery. Man's *progress* has been wave-like, and a wave we know is really stationary in spite of its apparent movement. The only way of escape is through renunciation and detachment, and that way is clearly laid down for us in Advaita Vedanta.

## CHARACTERIZATION OF KALI

The Puranas depict the effect of Kali on mankind with great vividness. We are still away from the full sway of Kali which is prophesied to come millenniums after. Watching the symptoms today, we are amazed at the imagination and prevision of the ancient sages who never despaired of the evil but only emphasized the efficacy of a devotional life even in such a dismal period. A condensed rendering of the description of Kali's role as given in the *Bhagavata XI 1. & 2* is presented below.

At that time rulership will rest for the most part with Mlechchas. These will be unrighteous, cruel and deceptive ; they will give but little and will be fiery with anger. Women, children cattle and twice-born souls have no safety from them. They will molest women and will have no respect for property. The subjects of the country will be short-lived and of mean prowess, without any purification and holy acts. They will be steeped in unbalanced activity or extreme dull-

ness. These will be swallowed by the Mlechchas in the shape of their Rulers. When the country is under their sovereignty the subjects will ape their customs, practices and speech. Through mutual oppression and by the harassment of kings the people will gradually perish.

And then day by day righteousness, veracity, purity, patience, compassion, strength, memory and life will decrease. In the Kali age the eminence of wealth alone will replace the ex-

cellence of birth and conduct. Law and justice will be determined by might alone. There will be no other criterion for married life except mutual attraction ; and mutual relations will be corrupted by deception.

Being born as a man or a woman the end that is sought will be nothing but sex pleasure. To be considered a Brahman a thread alone will suffice ; and to proceed from one station in life (*ashrama*) to another what is needed will be a mere change of external signs. Justice will be less powerful on the side of the weak man, and garrulity will be considered a mark of wisdom. To be considered not good, absence of riches will be enough ; and to be looked upon as a good man what is required will be to pretend to be so. A father wanting to give the daughter in marriage will be contented if there is some one to accept. It will be deemed that one has taken a bath if he has dressed up well and decorated himself. Instead of repairing to a holy resort, if a man goes to a distant source of water, he will consider that he has performed a pilgrimage.

In the Kali age beauty will be confined to hair-dressing, and looking after one's own good will be confined to filling the belly. A man will try to prove his honesty by stubborn assertion. Moreover liberality of men will be confined to arranging for their own family, and religion will be sought only for a good name. Thus the earth will be filled with wretched people, and the strong will rule. The greedy and cruel rulers will despoil the

subjects, who will take refuge in jungles deprived of their women and possessions. There will be no rains and famine will seize the country and people will be destroyed by extortion, inclemency of weather, and dearth of food. Hunger and thirst, disease and worry, will undo men who will not live over thirty years.

One will witness in the Kali age religion ending in atheism ; kings becoming decoits ; men living by theft, lies and wanton killing ; all castes reduced to the last ; cows degenerated into the size of goats ; all *ashramas* confined to that of the householders : friendship limited to relations ; vegetation rendered meagre ; clouds without rain and homes becoming void. In short Kali rules when man is inclined to evil ways :

*Tada avisat Kalir lokam  
pape yat ramate manah*

Suka concludes :

The body that goes by the name of the Ruler is in the end called only 'the refuse of worms' or mere ashes. Does he who gives pain to creatures for the sake of that body know his own good ? The sin against living creatures leads assuredly to hell. ' How could this whole earthly empire ruled by ancestors and now possessed by me pass on to my offsprings ? — Indulging in such thoughts unwise Rulers are full of conceit over their body and possessions ; but in the end leaving all they pass into oblivion. History has left only a name of all these rulers.

## SHELLEY AND NON-VIOLENCE OR AHIMSA.

By Diwan Bahadur T. Bhujanga Rao, M.A., B.L.

The great apostle of non-violence in India has often quoted the following lines from Shelley's poem, *The Mask of Anarchy* :

Let them ride among you there,  
Slash, and stab, and maim and hew,  
What they like, that let them do.

With folded arms and steady eyes,  
And little fear and less surprise,  
Look upon them as they slay  
Till their rage has died away.

These lines were addressed by the poet to the 'Men of England' soon after the Peterloo massacre of the year 1819 when a large gathering of men, women and children, assembled peacefully in St. Peter's Fields, Manchester, to demand a reform of Parliament, was mercilessly charged by the military under the orders of a nervous and foolish magistracy and dispersed, leaving more than 600 persons lying dead and wounded on the ground. The reform of Parliament was overdue and came in 1832. But a helpless and unoffending crowd had to meet death before the reform could come.

To understand the full significance of the above lines, one has to take them along with the last lines of the poem :—

Rise like Lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number --  
Shake your chains to earth like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen on you —  
Ye are many — they are few.

At first sight it might look as if these last lines were a call for an armed insurrection on the part of the people against the myrmidons of

a tyrannical administration. But Shelley was no advocate of violence. He was addressing a united, manly and brave people with traditions of freedom and democracy, and asked them to realise their strength and the cruel humiliation inflicted on the nation but to meet the offenders non-violently. Love is the silken cord binding the universe ; and Shelley asked the men of England to act with love in their hearts and forgiveness towards the offenders. It was the non-resistance of the strong that he taught.

### Ahimsa Before Gandhiji

This teaching has long been known to Indians as the teaching of *ahimsa*. It teaches, not the supine non-resistance of the weak, but the non-resistance of the strong due to the outpouring of love. Swami Vivekananda, no disciple of Tolstoi or Thoreau, said of *ahimsa*, long before Gandhiji, as follows : 'Buddha gave up his throne and renounced his position : that was true renunciation ; but there cannot be any question of renunciation in the case of a beggar who has nothing to renounce. So, we must always be careful about what we really mean when we speak of this non-resistance and ideal love. We must first take care to understand whether we have the power of resistance or not. Then, *having the power* (italics mine) if we renounce it and do not resist, we are doing a great act of love.' (Lectures on Karma Yoga.)

How, it may be asked, did Shelley come to preach this doctrine of

*ahimsa* of far-off India? It was by the transformation, or rather the sublimation, by him of the doctrine of Necessity imbibed by him in his youth from Godwin.

It is needless to say much about Godwin's theory of Necessity. In his *Political Justice* (Edition of 1793) Godwin wrote as follows: 'If we form a just and complete view of all the circumstances in which a living or intelligent being is placed, we shall find that he could not, in any moment of his existence, have acted otherwise than he has acted'. From this Godwin drew the inference that we should not 'entertain resentment, indignation and anger against those who fall into the commission of vice'. Shelley imbibed this teaching and taught it in his earlier poems. In *Queen Mab*, written in his 18th year, Shelley deified Necessity and wrote thus:

Necessity thou mother of the world !  
Unlike the God of human error,  
Requirest no prayers or praises.

#### Fatalist Murderer

It may here be incidentally mentioned that the above doctrine of Necessity should not be confounded with Fatalism. A fatalist believes that certain main points in the chain of events of a man's life are preordained but would concede free will to man with regard to the intermediate points. But the Necessitarian believes that the whole chain of events, and every link in the chain, is preordained and follows the universal law of causation. Thus, a fatalist may blame a judge for committing him to the gallows for the commission of murder, because according to the contention of the fatalist, the murder was done under inner compulsion and he had no choice of action. But it is not open to the Necessitarian to blame

the judge, for, if the murder was done as an act of necessity, the judge's order was also passed as an act of necessity. As Leslie Stephen says in his *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, with reference to this doctrine of Necessity : 'Like an atmosphere pressing equally in all directions, it leaves the previous equilibrium unaltered.' By denying free will to man, it saps the foundations of morality and makes a mechanized automaton of man.

But Shelley soon outgrew this soulless jejune creed. In reaction from the Calvinistic theology which prevailed in his time and which, according to Shelley, spoke of a 'jealous' anthropomorphic Deity wielding thunderbolts and lightning and ordaining the 'reprobation' of the greater part of mankind, Shelley began to conceive of God as the God of Love pervading the universe and said,

The Spirit of the worm beneath the sod  
In love and worship blends itself with God.

(*Epipsychedion.*)

Again, addressing the Spirit of Love he wrote :

Thou art the wine whose drunkenness is all  
We can desire, O Love ! .....  
Thou art the radianee which where ocean rolls  
Investesth it ; and when the heavens are blue  
Thou fillest them.

(*Prince Athanase.*)

#### Action Through Love

He was also profoundly affected by the teaching of love and suffering in the New Testament with its narration of the crucified Christ. As a result he conceived of the highest duty of man as being to forgive his enemies

and act through love. This, in fact, is the main teaching of his masterpiece, *The Prometheus Unbound*. Prometheus was a Titan and a god. By befriending the human race, he offended Zeus, who had him chained to the rocks in the Indian Caucasus where the Furies sent by the tyrant inflicted cruel tortures on Prometheus including the nailing of him to a cross. But, being a god, Prometheus knew his strength ; he could not be killed. At first, unable to bear the tortures, Prometheus cursed Zeus saying there would come an hour when Zeus, would fall from his seat in heaven through boundless space and time. But later, Prometheus felt sorry for the curse, saying,

It doth repent me : words are quick  
and vain ;

Grief for a while is blind, and so  
was mine,

I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

The curse of a god, however, can not go in vain. The hour struck ; and down went Zeus into the abyss, dragged by Demogorgon, the Greek Yama, the embodiment of the principle of Justice.

In regard to this teaching of Shelley and indeed in regard to the Hindu doctrine of *ahimsa*, one may ask, ' Is not life sacred ? Is it not the duty of man to save his own life when attacked by a cruel foe ? Is not this duty higher even than the principle of loving one's enemy ? ' Shelley gives the answer thus in the final address of Demogorgon to Prometheus :

To suffer woes which Hope thinks  
infinite ;

To forgive wrongs darker than  
death or night ;

To defy Power, which seems  
omnipotent ;

To love and bear ...

This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful  
and free ;

This is alone Life, Joy, Empire and  
Victory.

The goal of life is to attain that state of spirituality which would exercise love towards all, even towards enemies. It is possible that, by or during the exercise of our love, the enemy may be converted and may repent ; or, it is possible that retributive justice may overtake him in the shape of a Demogorgon. But, in our exercise of love, even if our bodies are slain, what does it matter when the goal of earthly life has been achieved and life everlasting has been secured ?

### *Evolutionary Stages of Man*

It is undeniable that this doctrine of love is too heavenly a regimen for ordinary mortals. It is said of Confucius that, recognising this, when asked by a disciple whether it was not his duty to return good for evil, Confucius said, ' If you return good for evil, with what will you recompense good ? Recompense good with good, and evil with justice '. So far as Hinduism is concerned, while prescribing *ahimsa* as the duty of the spiritually advanced men who have universal love in their hearts, Hinduism recognises the fact of men being in various evolutionary stages and prescribes different duties for different classes of men. The teaching of Hinduism is thus briefly put by Swami Vivekananda : ' Our duty is to encourage every one in his struggle to live up to his own highest ideal, and strive at the same time to make the ideal as near as possible to the truth '. This may in a sense be called a compromise of the highest truth, but it is inevitable in the present stage of the evolution of the human race.

In fact, the greatest advocates of the principles of non-violence and love have been found to commit themselves to action involving a compromise of those high principles. Has it not been said of Gandhiji that he gave up his pacifism recently to defeat the aggressive ends of Japan? And Shelley too was prepared for a similar compromise. A biographer (H. S. Salt),

quoting a passage from Shelley, writes of Shelley: 'He did not disguise his belief that if the aristocracy and plutocracy set themselves stubbornly against the introduction of reforms, a forcible remedy would be justifiable'. Thus the limitations of man do force themselves even on those who may be justifiably classed amongst idealists and visionaries!

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

The highest ideal in our Scriptures is the Impersonal, and would to God everyone of us here were high enough to realise that Impersonal ideal; but, as that cannot be, it is absolutely necessary for the vast majority of human beings to have a Personal ideal; and no nation can rise, can become great, can work at all, without enthusiastically coming under the banner of one of these great ideals in life. Political ideals, personages representing political ideals, even social ideals, commercial ideals, would have no power in India. We want spiritual ideals before us, we want enthusiastically to gather round grand spiritual names. Our heroes must be spiritual. Such a hero has been given to us in the person of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. If this nation wants to rise, take my word for it, it will have to rally enthusiastically round this name. It does not matter who preaches Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, whether I or you or anybody else. But him I place before you, and it is for you to judge, and for the good of our race, for the good of our nation, to judge now, what you shall do with this great ideal of life. One thing we are to remember, that it was the

purest of all lives that you have ever seen, or let me tell you distinctly that you have ever read of. And before you is the fact that it is the most marvellous manifestation of Soul power that you can read of, much less expect to see. Within ten years of his passing away, this power has encircled the globe; this fact is before you. In duty bound therefore for the good of our race, for the good of our religion, I place this great spiritual ideal before you. Judge him not through me, I am only a weak instrument. Let not his character be judged by seeing me. It was so great that if I, or any other of his disciples spent hundreds of lives, we could not do justice to a millionth part of what he really was. Judge for yourselves; in the heart of your hearts is the Eternal Witness, and may He, the same Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, for the good of our nation, for the welfare of our country, and for the good of humanity, open your hearts, make you true and steady to work for the immense change which must come, whether we exert ourselves or not. For, the work of the Lord does not wait for the likes of you or me. He can raise His workers from the dust

by hundreds and by thousands. It is a glory and a privilege that we are allowed to work at all under him.

Today the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is known all over India by its millions of people. Nay, the power of that man has spread beyond India, and if there has ever been a word of truth, a word of spirituality, that I have spoken anywhere in the world, I owe it to my Master; only the mistakes are mine.

Struck by the sayings and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna published in the two well-established journals, the *Brahmavadin* and the *Prabuddha Bharata*, and reading what the Brahmo preacher, Mr. Pratap Chandra Mazumdar, wrote about Sri Ramakrishna, (Paramahamsa Sreemati Ramakrishna : *Theistic Quarterly Review*, October, 1879), Prof. Max Muller was attracted by the sage's life. Sometime ago, a short sketch of Sri Ramakrishna's life also appeared in the well-known monthly journal of England, *The Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review* contributed by Mr. C. H. Tawney, M.A., the distinguished librarian of the India House. (A Modern Hindu Saint. January, 1896). Gathering a good deal of information from Madras and Calcutta, the Professor discussed Sri Ramakrishna's life and his teachings, in a short article in the foremost monthly English journal, *The Nineteenth Century*. (A Real Mahatman) There he expressed himself to the effect that this new sage easily won his heart by the originality of his thoughts, couched in novel language and impregnate with fresh spiritual power, which he infused into India, when she was merely echoing the thoughts of her ancient sages, for several centuries past, or is in recent times, those of Western scholars. He, the Professor,

had read often India's religious literature, and thereby well acquainted himself with the life-stories of many of her ancient sages and saints; but is it possible to expect such lives again, in this age in this India of modern times? Ramakrishna's life was a reply in the affirmative to such a question. And it brought new life, by sprinkling water, as it were, at the root of the creeper of hope regarding India's future greatness and progress, in the heart of this great-souled scholar, whose whole life has been dedicated to her.

The learned people of Europe and America read the article ('A Real Mahatman' in the August, 1896 number of the *Nineteenth Century*) with great interest and many have been attracted towards its subject, Sri Ramakrishna Deva — with the result that the wrong ideas of the civilised West about India as a country full of naked, infanticidal, ignorant, cowardly race of men who were cannibals, and little removed from beasts, who forcibly burnt their widows, and were steeped in all sorts of sin and darkness — towards the formation of which ideas, the Christian missionaries and, I am as much ashamed as pained to confess, some of my own countrymen also have been chiefly instrumental — began to be corrected. The veil of the gloom of ignorance, which was spread across the eyes of the Western people by the strenuous efforts of these two bodies of men, has been slowly and slowly rending asunder. Can the country that has produced a great world-teacher like Sri Bhagavan Ramakrishna Deva, be really full of such abominations as we have been asked to believe in? or have we been all along duped by interested organised bodies of mischief-makers, and

kept in utter obscurity and error about the real India? Such a question naturally arises in the Western mind.

And to stop the empty shouts of his inferior opponents, he (Prof. Max Muller) has published, by way of a warning to them, the book, *Ramakrishna, His life and sayings*, in which he has collected more complete information, and given a fuller account of his life and utterances so that the reading public may get a better knowledge of this great Sage and his religious ideas, — the sage, "who has lately obtained considerable

celebrity, both in India and America, where his disciples have been actively engaged in preaching his gospel and winning converts to his doctrines, even among Christian audiences." The Professor adds, "This may seem very strange, nay, almost incredible to us ..... Yet every human heart has its religious yearnings, it has a hunger for religion, which sooner or later wants to be satisfied. Now the religion taught by the disciples of Ramakrishna comes to these hungry souls without any outward authority", and is therefore welcomed as the free elixir of life.

## "THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BEAUTIFUL.\*

*By P. Sankaranarayanan, M.A., B.L., L.T.*

Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari has now published in this book the lectures on the Philosophy of the Beautiful which he delivered in 1933 as Honorary Reader to the University of Madras. Like his other works this shows evidence of the deep scholarship and acute analysis that the learned professor always brings to bear on the subjects that he studies with his characteristic thoroughness.

The Beautiful though always fascinating to every heart and mind, has for the large part remained a forbidding subject of study to all but the most penetrating intellects. Humanity generally has been drawn by things of beauty and has been content to enjoy them in the mass. But, the average man hardly pauses to reflect on the essential nature of the Beautiful, to determine the

standards of aesthetic criticism and to assess the place and function of beauty in the scheme of things. Here, as elsewhere, it is the reflective mind that can make such an intellectual approach to Beauty and understand its true inwardness. Prof. Srinivasachari has rendered a great service in presenting in this volume the views of the thinkers of the West and of the East on this concept and has exhibited their relative merits by presenting them in juxtaposition. Croce's theory of the Beautiful rightly begins the First Chapter of the work in which his intuition-expression interpretation of the concept is neatly expressed and clearly exposed. The biological, the physical and the psychological theories come next and are shown to be inadequate to express the core of the concept of Beauty. The sen-

\*Being an expository review of the book with this title by Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari, M.A., Retired Principal and Professor of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras.

sationalistic theory of Hume and the rational formalism of Kant end the chapter. A consideration of these several views, each of them defective in itself, enables us to arrive at the fundamental elements of Beauty by adopting, if one may do so, the *neti* method of approach. Beauty is not merely hedonistic. It is not the agreeable only. Nor is it even the useful or the successful biologically. It is not the result of self-deception. It is neither absolutely subjective nor completely objective. Affirmatively expressed, Beauty is a quality which inheres in an object, capable of contemplation, achievement and enjoyment and is as autonomous as Truth and Goodness with which it constitutes the triad of eternal verities. But logic and law cut and sunder the intellectual and moral life; they delight in analysis and criticism. Beauty has a different function. It is at once expressive and expansive. Truly spiritual as it is, a thing of beauty is a mirror of the Supreme Beauty that it expresses in itself. The contemplation of Beauty in the manifold objects of the universe expands one's consciousness and makes one thirst for the Beauty of the Supreme and to drink it more and more as one gets intuitive experience of it. While the True and the Good are laboriously beaten into shape on the slow and painful anvil of the logician and the moralist, the Beautiful is the result of a spiritual alchemy which thrills the beholder and transforms him into an Other. Sense-born, Beauty transcends sensuousness. Like the lotus springing from the mire, though material in origin and content, it has a heavenward direction and a spiritual purpose.

In the Second Chapter of his work, the author considers the standards of aesthetic criticism. He starts with

the realist's view that a thing is beautiful in proportion as it is a faithful copy of nature. Artistic excellence lies in skillful imitation. On this view, the ugly and the sordid should be considered beautiful if they have been cleverly copied. Such a theory does not take into account the psychological factors of choice and arrangement or the inventiveness of the artist. The artist is an architect and not an artisan. His mind is not a machine; his consciousness is not a mere camera. The creative genius of the artist expresses the Beauty that was not on sea or land. The realist cannot understand vision or inspiration and his copy may well become vulgar mimicry. True Beauty transcends thought and sight and the true artist always creates better than he knows. According to the Idealistic theory, 'in a mood of intense creative activity, the master artist idealises the objects of nature, or the thoughts and actions of human beings and creates new forms and figures projecting into them his own vision of what should be or might be. . . . The spiritual ear is different from the material ear, and is attuned to find suggestive and significant meanings not perceived at all by the ordinary ear.' Prof. Srinivasachari considers both these views extreme and one-sided. 'While the ultra-realist stresses external beauty and the ultra-idealistic, the mental creation, the true aesthetician avoids the extremes by a blending of the real and the ideal.'

Classicism and Romanticism are opposing schools of thought in aesthetic criticism and the adherence to the one or the other is generally a matter of temperament much the same as conservatism or liberalism in any other department of life's activity. Fidelity to tradition, clear conception

and faultless execution are the virtues of classicism; but, it suffers from a tendency to become cold, insipid and unemotional. The romanticist breaks loose from conventions and constraints and, like the skylark, flies aloft in his fancy and sings in entrancing strains of unpremeditated art. The uncommon, the mysterious, the hazy and the suggestive are the regions in which he loves to roam. Imaginative adventure and novelty of creation give the romantic artist his especial individuality. But, his extravaganzas may border on the unreal and lead to the unbelievable. Classicism and romanticism, as the author points out, are complementary. 'The stability of classicism should be enriched by the spontaneity of romanticism.' The actual must be the foundation of the ideal and the ideal must provide the fruition of the actual.

This leads us to the question if Beauty lies in form or in matter. 'Form is the soul of art which transforms its medium and makes it throb with life and thrill with joy.' Beauty 'which sleeps in the marble wakes up at the touch of the imaginative artist.' So, according to Bradley, it is form that counts and not matter. Hegel holds that form and content are inseparable and that matter, far from impeding art, inspires it by enriching it by its special qualities. In Bosanquet's view, form and matter determine each other. Each is correlative of the other. In very truth, like the body and soul, matter and form must blend together in artistic creation. As the learned Professor so aptly observes, 'It is the happy combination of a great theme and a great style that makes such works as the *Paradise Lost* and *King Lear* masterpieces of great art.' In the marriage of art, form transforms matter, ravishes it

out of its materiality. Mated with form, matter becomes a symbol, a vehicle of the spirit and is itself ultimately spiritualised. The subjection of matter leads to its sublimation.

Prof. Srinivasachari ends this chapter with a survey of the theory of *rasas* according to Sanskrit poetics. The *kavi* or the true poet is not a mere versifier, but he is a *tatvadarśin* who has an intuitive insight into truth. His words express his experience, the beauty of the former being commensurate with the intensity of the latter. The *navarasas* starting with *sringara* and ending with *santa* are born of the experiential insight of the poet and are conveyed to the reader or listener in *dhvani*, a quality of style which is at once elucidating and elusive. *Dhvani* invests the poem with its uniqueness, entices the audience to the artist and is inexhaustible to the understanding as it is inexpressible to the utterance. It is the medium of rapport between the suggestive poet and the responsive reader and is the signpost pointing to the heart of the poet, the *kavihṛdayam*. To Indian thought art is an end in itself and not a means to an end. Born of an inner urge and immediate necessity, it is spontaneous and not calculated. Its simplicity, its sweetness and its grace rule out all economic considerations which delight in bargaining and dividing. Art makes an instant and insistent appeal to the heart of humanity. Of all the *rasas* that the poet delights to portray, two are pre-eminent, the *karuna* and the *sringara*, the former by the empathetic appeal that it makes and the latter by its supreme universality. Was it a mere accident that Valmiki's *soka* expressed itself in a *sloka*? Had it not a deeper meaning, this initiation of the starve-sense ascetic into the mysteries of the life

of the divine through his *karuna* at the killing of the *krauncha*? And, similarly, when the Lord disports with his devotees to steal their hearts and annex their souls, what other method could he adopt than of *sringara* in the course of which existence vanishes in enjoyment?

While the West merely analysed Beauty and Art into their constituent elements and left them at that, to the credit of Indian aesthetics it must be said it made a synthetic approach to the concept. If the essence of art lies in its spiritual appeal, the true function of the artist is to reveal the spirituality imbedded in the things of the world. Thus, in India, every art, music, painting, sculpture and poetry portrays the universal spirit in sound and colour, in marble and stone. The artist becomes a devotee. His words become worship ; his music is a meditation. His statue become an idol in creating which he forgets himself. 'The inspired artist looks from nature, the body of beauty to nature's God who is the soul of beauty.'

The third and the fourth chapters of the book deal with the metaphysics of the Beautiful as expounded by western and eastern thinkers. Questions like Is Beauty objective or subjective? Is Beauty real or ideal? Is it a quality or value? Is Beauty absolute? have been the persistent problems of thinkers on aesthetics. In the idealistic interpretation of Beauty, according to Plato, the things of the world are only reflections in varying degrees of expression of the Idea of Beauty. 'To Plotinus,' in whom the cold intellectual idealism of Plato is warmed and enriched by a mystic glow, 'there is an essential and eternal Beauty which is One and which is enthroned in the Yonder'. The artist longs for it and strives to

achieve the ecstasy of communion with it. According to Hegel, 'art is the synthesis of the abstract concept and the material given in sense.' He looks upon it, however, as a lower revelation of reality since the absolute spirit can be grasped only by philosophic thought.' Art is transcended in philosophy and in Hegel's view the fulfilment of art is its death. According to Bradley, the concept of Beauty is full of contradictions and suffers from the fatal dualism between experience and content. Its immediacy militates against its communicability. It is partial and particular and is never exhaustive of the Absolute. Its relational character condemns it as an appearance of Reality and it is not Reality itself. While for Bradley the Absolute transcends the beautiful, to Bosanquet, it is immanent in the beautiful. In the highest forms of beauty, there is a union of contraries and that makes for harmony and joy. To Schopenhauer the pessimist art does not lead to reality, but away from it. 'The aesthetic experience of beauty is a means of liberation from the particularity and the weary weight of life.' Schiller and Schelling hold the opposite view and recognise the eternal value of beauty. Schelling considers art as representing infinite life and calls it intuition objectified. In Beauty, Truth and Goodness are synthesised.

At variance with all these western views both in origin and direction are the views of the Vedantins which are expounded in the fourth chapter. Hindu thought on aesthetics is synthetic first and last and knows no antagonism between naturalism and idealism, classicism and romanticism. 'Art is to the Hindu thinker the symbolic expression of Reality and its language is suggestive rather than explanatory.'

Reality is not merely the True and the Good, it is also the Beautiful according to Vedantic thought. This idea is verified and verifiable in aesthetic experience. Like *satya* and *gnana*, *saundarya* which makes for *ananda* is an essential constituent of the Absolute. Art finds its consummation in Religion. The Lord Himself is a supreme Artist and the universe is His artistic creation. In His work He does not go by rule which constrains nor is He groping in a directionless nescience. In the free exercise of His will, in the unrestricted play of His *lila*, He combines stability and spontaneity. Being super-abundantly beautiful, He enjoys the bliss of His creation. Nothing delights Him so much as to help His creatures to enjoy the bliss of His beauty and, for this purpose, He transforms Himself into human and other shapes and makes His devotees live and move with Him in flesh and blood and, attracting their sight, He allures their hearts. The *Bhuvanasundara* contemplated by the *yogis* as the Infinite and the Eternal, walked the earth in times of yore in quest of voluntary intercourse with man. And, at the present day, in the abundance of His mercy for the erring mortal, entrenching Himself in the Image, He assails the heart of His devotees to hold court there as his *antaryamin*. There is a purpose in this divine sport and that is to annex the finite to the Infinite.

The creative urge so characteristic of art is sublimated. Sensuous lust becomes transformed into spiritual love. Blind instinct and clamant desire get canalised into *bhakti*, and bestial pleasures pale before divine bliss. The relation between the *bhakta* and the *Bhagavan* is the highest and truest expression of art and shows how a satisfactory metaphysic

of beauty is rooted in religion. The realisation of God as the Beautiful in which process the Infinite and the finite co-operate is the essential and final purpose of artistic creation. What a man meditates on, that he becomes. Contemplating on the Lord as the super-eminently Beautiful, the artist-devotee is absorbed in his work and enjoys the while the unending and unalloyed bliss of *Brahman* by a soul-sight of that *jyotishamjyoti*, the Light of lights before whom the lesser luminaries of the universe and the creations of mundane art are like the candle flame to the sun's brilliance.

In his last and final chapter, Prof. Srinivasachari considers the controversy between the schools of Sankara, Bhaskara and Ramanuja regarding the *Taittiriya sruti anandamaya* and concludes that ‘the *upanishads* are equally emphatic in affirming the bliss that results from the intuition of infinite beauty as they are in declaring that *Brahman* is absolutely blissful.’ The calculus of pleasures adopted in the *Taittiriya upanishad* leading to the absolute and unconditioned bliss of *Brahmananda* shows how *Brahmananda* is beyond human thought and speech and should be intuitively experienced but cannot be logically expressed.

In the triad of Art, the Artist and the Audience—the creation, the creator and the critic—there is an attunement of content and character which leads to enjoyment or *rasa*. The work of art is the result of the inspiration which the artist derives from the Supreme Beauty. The art-critic must be a *sahrdaya*. He must have a responsive mind which can catch the artist's suggestive creation even as the artist himself caught the divine inspiration. The parallel to this in the religious level is the attunement of the finite to the Infinite. Adopting the attitude

of *sahridayas*, the individual yearns for the Infinite with the same ardour as that with which the Infinite invites and invades the individual. Ravished by the soul-sight of the Transcendental Beauty, the artist-bhakta sees it portrayed in all the things of the world and even as he tries to express it in the creations of his genius, he feels that, not his, but some other hand directs his brush, some other breath blows into his flute, some other voice sings through his lips. The more he creates and contemplates such things of beauty, the more is he infilled with a sense of that Supreme Beauty who is the source and sustenance of all art and his one purpose in life is to be in tune more and more with Him and to lose himself in the bliss of His excellence. So does the artist become an aspirant and his *bhakti* blossoms into *mukti*.

Thus the Vedantic approach to aesthetics, is a characteristically Indian approach. Whereas the western thinkers were content merely to give a critique of beauty, of the principles underlying its apprehension and appreciation, they never bothered with the necessity or the method of attaining it. To the Hindu mind, art provides the ladder from earth to heaven, from man to God. The ladder is an instrument of ascent as of descent. Heaven comes down to earth, God incarnates into the world through this ladder and man and Maker meet and commune with an ecstasy ineffable as it is inexpressible. The book details every rung of this ladder and lucidly portrays the artistic approach to the heart of Reality through beauty and love.

The idea of God as the Beautiful is a unique conception and is a distinct and eminent contribution of Indian philosophy and religion. The

devotee loses himself in the contemplation of divine Beauty. Beholding the *manmathamanmatha* in his mind's eye in meditative concentration or in flesh and blood by the fruition of his *tapas* or in the sweetly smiling image in which the Lord has so condescendingly breathed His presence or in the innermost recesses of his own heart wherefrom He permeates his whole being, the aspirant to salvation is thrilled with rapture and surrenders his self at the feet of the Supreme to salvage his soul. There were those who were enslaved by the auspicious qualities of the Lord—*gunairdasyamupagatah*—and others who were enticed by His super-excellent beauty; for, is He not the *Bhuvanasundara*, *trilokanayaka* and even *pumsam drishtichittapahari*? Of these, the latter are never weary of drinking the unceasing and unsatiating nectar—the *aravamudu*—of the divine Form and are content to stand for ever and for ever and gaze and gaze in love and wonder. So jealous was one such of this priceless gift to his vision that, forgetting his office, but anxious to ward off the evil eye, he broke forth into a song of invocation conferring on his Lord longevity beyond the count of years.

The aesthetic approach to the divine indicates at once God's accessibility and His attainability by man. It is both reformatory and transforming. For who that has beheld beauty—and that such transcendent Beauty—will ever again be drawn to ugliness in form or feature, in thought, word or deed? It is an inclusive approach, simple as it is spontaneous. It demands no logic which causes a headache or any meticulous ritual which wears the flesh. All beings, animate and inanimate, all creatures, man and bird and beast, old and

young, the scholar and the simpleton, the ascetic and the amorous, the courtier and the cowherd, all can participate in it and attain it each according to his capacity. For, did not the trees of the forest and the waters of the river, the cow and the cobra, the *gopis* and the *yogis*, all stand entranced when they heard the ravishing strains of the Lord's flute

and feasted their eyes on the bewitching smile of His sweet lips when He sported with them on the banks of the Jumna? Is it any wonder that they forgot themselves the while and lost their individuality in the magic of His Form and the rapture of His song? What will we give to live just one brief hour in that glorious eternity?

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Sri Matritatvaprakasa (SANSKRIT) COMPILED AND PUBLISHED  
BY T. V. KAPALI SASTRI, SHRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM, PONDICHERRY.  
PRICE RE. 1/- PP. 136.**

The present work is again another challenge to the trite affirmation that Sanskrit is a 'dead' language: for here is in Sanskrit garb a spirited translation of an obstruse philosophical work—Sri Aurobindo's *Mother*—presented with much clarity of thought and mastery of expression. The author's command of the classical language is praiseworthy; and it may be hoped that the present book may induce some interest among the Pandit world for the Philosophy and insight of Sri Aurobindo. A short work called *Tattvaprabha* appended at the end gives a very brief introduction to the thought and discipline advocated by the sage of Pondicherry. While admiring the book we cannot but suggest that its value would have been

increased if the gloss of the author in prose were more profuse and detailed. The naturalness of the verses also would have been greater if the author had been more free in his composition. Nevertheless we are all appreciation for this novel attempt.

**THE SCIENTIFIC VIEW OF DEATH:** By Swami Abhedananda. Published by Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 19B, Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta. Price 6 As. Pp. 28.

This short brochure ought to interest all; for no living man can avoid the important problem discussed here. The discussion is thoroughly scientific, historical and statistical. The philosophical or Vedantic implication of this important study concludes the thesis with a sublime appeal.

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

### CYCLONE RELIEF

#### Ramakrishna Mission's Work.

Readers of Newspapers are aware of the harrowing tales of devastation caused by the recent cyclone and flood in Bengal and Orissa. The Ramakrishna Mission has organised relief to the sufferers in the Midnapore and 24 Parganas districts of Bengal. The first distribution has already taken place from the Ajanbari, Majhirchauk, Srikantha and Dhablat relief centres of the Contai, Tamluk and Diamond Harbour sub-divisions. One more centre is being started in the Khejuri Thana of Contai and one in the Nandigram Thana of Tamluk. The area taken by us covers 14 unions comprising about two hundred villages.

We have sent from Calcutta by boat 400 maunds of rice, 3,000 pieces of new cloth, 3,000 cotton blankets, 1,000 mats, 253 shirts and frocks and 5 cases of powdered milk to the Midnapore area. Another consignment will shortly follow.

For the relief of the sufferers in the Balasore District of Orissa, which has been equally affected, arrangements are being made to start a centre.

We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of Rs. 20,892 for our Relief Fund. The notable donations being : A Friend, Calcutta, Rs. 10,000; The Ananda Bazar Patrika and Hindustan Standard Bengal Cyclone Relief Fund, Rs. 2,000; Sjt Charu Chandra Das, Calcutta, in memory of Srimati Laxmi Mani Dasi, Rs. 700; Mr Tulsi Das Kilachand, Bombay, Rs. 501; Sir N.N. Sircar, Calcutta, Rs. 500; A Friend, Poona, Rs. 500; A devotee, Cossipore, Rs. 500; Rupchand Trust, Calcutta, Rs. 500; A Sympathiser, Rs. 500.

#### *Report of the work done*

In the Midnapore Dist. the Mission has taken up relief work in Unions 4 to 9 of the Khejuri Thana comprising about 115 villages in the Contai sub-division, and in Unions 2 and 3 of the Mayna Thana, comprising 25 villages, and Unions 13 to 15 of the Nandigram Thana, comprising 33 villages, in the Tamluk sub-division.

In the Khejuri Thana 240 mds. 26 srs. of paddy were distributed on

the 13th November in 25 villages from the Majhirchauk centre. A second centre has just been opened at Khadjuri. Work in the rest of the area is being organised as quickly as possible. In the Mayna Thana 253 mds. 3 srs. of paddy were distributed on the 4th and 11th November in 25 villages from the Srikantha centre. In the Nandigram Thana the first distribution has just taken place from the Tekhali centre.

In the 24-Parganas District a relief centre has been started at Dhablat in the Diamond Harbour sub-division, which distributed 55 mds. 20 srs. of rice and other foodstuffs in 11 villages on the 5th and 12th November. Another centre has just been started at Sumatinagar, a few miles off Dhablat.

In Orissa, a relief centre has already been started at Daruha, in the Jaleswar sub-division of the Balasore District. The condition there is reported to be extremely bad.

Besides large quantities of rice, cloth, blankets, etc., we gratefully acknowledge receipt of Rs. 42,108 for our Cyclone relief fund up to the 18th November, the notable contributions since the 12th being as follows : The Ananda Bazar Patrika and Hindusthan Standard Bengal Cyclone Relief Fund, Rs. 12,000 ; The President, Midnapore Flood Relief Committee, Gun & Shell Factory & I. G. U. A., Cossipur, Rs. 1,000 ; Sjt. Panchu Kali Saha, Calcutta, Rs. 501 ; The Calcutta Iron Merchants' Association, Rs. 500 ; Sm. Saraju Bala Devi, Dacca, Rs. 500 ; A Devotee, Bankura, Rs. 500 ; Officers & staff of the office of the Chief Controller of Purchase (Munitions), Calcutta, Rs. 427-4.0.

We appeal to the generous public for further contributions in cash and kind, which will be thankfully received and acknowledged by : The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Post Belur Math, Dist Howrah.

(Sd.) SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,  
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission. 19-11-42

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

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## OUR IMMORTAL CAPTAIN

### I

Awakened India looks forward to the celebration in November this year of the Silver Jubilee of Swami Vivekananda's glorious *debut* at the world's Parliament of Religions at Chicago. That was an unparalleled victory for Hinduism on foreign soil, a vindication of India's worth before the savants of the West. 'From that day' writes Swami Vivekananda to a friend in India referring to the day of his appearance at the Parliament, 'I became a celebrity. And the day I read my paper on Hinduism, the hall was packed as it had never been before.' That was only the beginning of a cultural conquest of the West by India. With America as his 'base of operations' the Swami crossed over to England thrice, gave a glimpse of India's spiritual treasures to the elite of the country, toured almost every country on the continent, as a true Indian *rishi* on alien soil, and proved worthy of his name, 'the cyclonic monk of India.'

The position and prestige of India in western eyes made such victories a great national necessity for India then. The new scientific successes and the wave of universal change in human power and material conditions of life which it brought, had infatuated the West, nay the whole of the westernised world. They came to believe that there was some innate intellectual drive in the West, and some innate indolence and conservatism in the East, that assured the Europeans a world predominance for ever. 'In the closing years of the 19th century,' writes H. G. Wells, 'it was assumed to be a natural and inevitable thing that all the world should fall under European dominion.' 'Even today' he adds, 'there are many people, who do not realize that in Asia the average brain is not one whit inferior in quality to the average European brain; that history shows Asiatics to be bold, as vigorous, as generous, as self-sacrificing and as capable of strong collective action as Europeans.' And when

western men, mind and culture began to pour into India in an air of overbearing superiority, it was India's greatest need to prove her innate worth not only on Indian soil, but on western soil. Swami Vivekananda's explorations in the West came as the remarkable fulfilment of this need.

## II

His mission to the West was only a part of his greater mission.

'We shall set the world on fire' thunders he from New York to a co-worker of his in India. It was this unflickering faith in himself as the blazing beacon of India's spiritual culture that eminently fitted him for the task of a cultural ambassador, nay a conqueror. He considered it a sacred opportunity to be given to serve his country that way : 'Let those who will, join us and be blessed.' How can India's culture be made to take the world by storm and to ascend to its guruhood ? He had no illusions that a parade of India's ancestral glories which are in their embers now would accomplish the task of raising India in the estimation of the world. As a true Indian he believed in intrinsic strength first and then only in the efficacy of its outward manifestation. India, he thought, must develop materially and spiritually and must assert her inner worth before she can hope to capture the imagination and appreciation of the westerners. And he had gauged the magnitude of the task correctly. No cultural narcissism blinded his eyes from seeing the practical intelligence and cultural eminence of the westerners. He was wisely appreciative of their virtues ; for, he himself was a teacher of virtue, a preacher of light and not of darkness. 'You may be astonished

to hear, says he, 'that as practical Vedantists, the Americans are better than we are. I used to stand on the sea-shore at New York and look at the emigrants coming from different countries, crushed, down-trodden, hopeless, unable to look a man in the face.....And mark you, in six months, those very men were walking erect, well-clothed and looking everybody in the face. He went about and found a new life ; perhaps he went to Washington, shook hands with the President of the United States. Then the veil of Maya slipped away from him. He is Brahman, he who has been hypnotised into slavery and weakness, is once more awake and he rises up and finds himself a man, in a world of men.' But then he compares notes and the pitiable picture of his motherland comes up and he wails :

'Aye, in this country of ours, the very birthplace of the Vedanta, our masses have been hypnotised for ages into that state. And the result is that they have been sinking, sinking, sinking.' While the masses of India, the backbone of the country, are languishing, how can India raise up its head ? How can he bring her to the fore to take her place beside the nations of the world ? That is why his heart ached to think of the poor, the low, the masses in India. They have no chance, no way, to climb up. They feel the blows showering upon them by a cruel society. They have forgotten that they too are men. Hence he felt the urgent need of giving back to them their lost individuality and dynamism so that India may return to her pristine health and position.

The more he travelled in the West and saw men and things, the greater grew his conviction on this behalf. He saw that the common people the

world over were on the march. The second half of the 19th century was a period of rapid advance in popular education throughout the westernised world. The mechanical revolution, the power behind this advance, though it rode rough-shod over social conditions was insistent on the complete abolition of a totally illiterate class throughout the world. There was a gradual appearance of the 'ordinary people' as a class with a will and ideas in common. And the emphasis of the propagandist religions like Christianity and Islam on individual self-respect inspired the massive movements of the 'ordinary people' in many parts of the globe. The enthusiasm of the commonality for the first crusade, the equalitarian insurrections of the peasantry from the Wycliffe period onward and the Chateau-burning of the French Revolution were the frantic outbursts of a freedom long-suppressed but newly gained by the masses. The Commune of Paris was the first effective appearance of the town artisan as a political power. The Communistic fever was soon on Europe and it raged until the monarch and the deity made their exit, leaving the masses to form their own government and believe in their own god and religion. When the masses in the West were rising to their feet, filled with a consciousness of their intrinsic strength and worth, how can the Indian masses be a lifeless mass and yet India be a source of light and guidance to others. One must be strong before one can give strength to others. And with India it is not the strength of the muscle, but the strength of the spirit. The masses must be charged with spiritual strength and then the whole nation would rise like one man to

fulfil its destiny. To Swami Vivekananda the way was clear.

### III

The strength vibrant in the Upanishads, India's Books of Life, must be made to enter the blood of the people. The ancient Aryan ideals must relive in the lives of a people coherent and strong. The Hindu scriptures characterise a spiritual disposition as the home of harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, uncovetousness, gentleness, modesty, energy, forgiveness, purity, and absence of pride and hatred. Ancient Hindu society was the fertile field of such spiritual virtues. The Swami had in mind such ideal societies when he spoke of raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realization of that great ideal of the spiritual man, who is non-resisting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure, meditative and chaste, in short, the type of the practical Vedantin the Gita speaks of. So to make 'philosophers' was the social problem to Swami Vivekananda.

The Swami's approach to the problem was typically Indian. To him man was essentially good and the basis of all systems, social or political rested upon the goodness of man. Religion of the genuine variety attempts man's transformation by contacting man's essentially good nature. And so it is that we find the Swami was never tired of the counsel to apply religion to society for the cure of India's national ills. One is tempted to make Spinoza, the political mystic to speak. 'Why is there a social problem?' asks he. 'Is it because men are "bad"?' 'Nonsense' answers Spinoza, 'the terms "good" and "bad" as conveying moral approval and disapproval are philosophically out of court; they mean nothing

except that each of us wishes all men to live according to *his* desire.' It is exactly the imposition of personal preferences as moral standards with all the sanctity of supernatural sanction that has been the bane of Indian society. The intellectually and spiritually high in society has been taking a stand and dictating to those 'below' them. They invented the doctrine of *lokachara* and have been riding over the rights of the poor masses. The fault is not with religion, as Swami Vivekananda time and again urges ; but with the use to which it has been put.

'No religion on earth,' he says, 'preaches the dignity of humanity in such lofty strains as Hinduism and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism.' 'Religion is not at fault' he stresses. 'On the other hand, your religion teaches you that every being is only your own self multiplied. But it was the want of practical application, the want of sympathy, the want of heart.' 'I do not believe in a God or religion,' he repeats, 'which cannot wipe the widow's tears and bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth.' He then proclaims his programme : 'India must be raised, the poor are to be fed, education is to be spread. More bread, more opportunity for everybody.' Simple words, but when brought to realization make a nation.

To this end he stressed the great need of seeking the aid of science, which paves the path of progress with comforts and conveniences. He calls on the nation to set itself to dig the earth with the help of western science and produce food-stuffs—by discovering new avenues to production, by our own exertions, aided by science.

#### IV

But where to find the necessary aids to achieve these plans and who will come forward to put their shoulders to the task may be a puzzling question to us of little faith, but not to Swami Vivekananda. 'Money is not wanted' he says. 'Men are wanted. A hundred thousand men and women, fired with the zeal of holiness, fortified with eternal faith in the Lord, and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor and the fallen and the down-trodden, will go over the length and breadth of the land, preaching the gospel of salvation, the gospel of help, the gospel of social raising-up, the gospel of equality.' And true religion will also afford them an inspiring metaphysic that will stir them to action : 'Love and charity for the whole human race ; I do not mean the sentimental statement that all men are brothers, but that one must feel the oneness of human life.' While the solidarity of human life provides a sound metaphysic for altruistic action, love and the capacity for renunciation for a high and noble cause will sustain these workers in their efforts.

Writes he in an exalted mood : 'India wants the sacrifice of at least a thousand of her young men, men, mind and not brutes—come, be men ! Come out of your narrow holes and have a look abroad. See how the nations are on the march ! Do you love man ? Do you love your country ? Then, come, let us struggle for higher and better things ; look not back, no, not even if you see the dearest and nearest cry. Look not back, but forward !

Few sons of India have with such throbbing heart felt for her and her unfortunate children and have with

such importunity appealed for a combined effort for their redemption. He was anxious to work the country to a high pitch of activity and then slowly take it on to *sattva*; for was he not a mystic of mystics and a paradoxical one at that. Only his *guru* was appreciative and apprehensive of his mystic depths. After the Swami's first experience of *samadhi* his great *guru* is reported to have said, 'I will keep it, with me. You shall return to it when your work is done.' But for this, he would have rushed into the oblivion of the snow-bound caves of the Himalayas and not into the lime-light of the plains. All the same his message of energism was not directed towards moulding India after the western model, to be yet another combatant in the great armageddon, to range herself along with others red in tooth and claw with ravine. India of Swami Vivekananda's dreams with her energism verging on *sattva* will be the messenger of peace and light to the war-weary world.

## V

Aptly has it been said by a great living savant that the Swami was the greatest synthesis India ever produced. In him we find the passion for the Indo-European synthesis of a Raja Ram Mohan, the apostolic ardour of a Kesab Chandra and the rishi's radiance of a Dayananda. He

had all these and something more : He was the sole heir to Sri Rama-krishna's spiritual realizations. For, did not the latter transfer all his wealth to his choicest disciple and say weeping : 'To-day I am a poor fakir ; I have nothing ?'

Such was our immortal Captain. His call comes to us with an inescapable magic spell : ' This national ship, my countrymen, my friends, my children—this national ship has been ferrying millions and millions of souls across the waters of life. But to-day, perhaps through your own fault, this boat has become a little damaged, has sprung a leak, and would you therefore curse it ?.....If there are holes in this national ship, this society of ours, we are its children. Let us go and stop the holes. Let us gladly do it with our heart's blood, and if we cannot, then let us die. We will make a plug of our brains and put them into the ship, but condemn it, never.'

When we usher into our midst the annual remembrance of his holy name, his birthday—which falls on the 28th of this month—let it waft to us from afar the dauntless spirit and self-effacing love of our beloved Captain, let it bring to us with the birth of this new year high resolve and firm determination to go forth and stop the 'holes in this national ship of ours,' if need be, by making a plug of our brains.

## OBEDIENCE: THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF ORGANISATION

Man's movement towards his fullness, the Ultimate Reality has always been characterised by a slowly unravelling oneness with his goal, an innate sense of belonging to an organised whole, a sort of an organic sympathy even, with the life of the total organism that is the universe, and obedience to its laws. Such relations express the underlying harmony that subsists between man and Reality, though the relations manifest in different colours. It is only on the basis of this harmony that man's fulfilment in identity with Reality can be explained. So then the faith in the ultimate purpose of the organisation that is this universe, and the obedience to its laws that conduce to his growth and culminate in his final liberation are fundamental with man. Without such faith life, especially organised life would not have been possible. It is this faith that impelled the aboriginal man to enter into *contract* with his kind and form society. The same faith urged him to evolve the habit of government and harness it for the better realization of his aspirations. If man lifted himself up from the animal level to the human level by entering society, he rose to fulfil the divine promise in him by entering the religious organisation. There he comes to realise increasingly the divine purpose implicit in him. Thus we see that from his consciousness of himself as a self-sufficient limb of the cosmic body and of his ability to grasp its intent and fulfil its behest, flow the sanction and sustenance of all man-made organisations and his obedience thereto. Such a faith forms the first need for the fulfilment of the

highest destiny of life, and when it suffers from any lack, with it everything else also languish and perish.

### *Transition from Social to Religious Organisation.*

It is profitable to go into the growth of society and governmental organisation as they reflect the evolution of man's need of obedience to an organisation for the fruition of his ultimate ends. It has already been stated above that society came into being through the contract among men. Such social contract was being sustained by the continuous consent of those who entered it. The atmosphere society gave for the fuller realisation of man's aspirations was another factor which assured its life. In society, man being in league with his comrades, he had not to fight single-handed with his 'enemies'. Man was quick to see the benefit of surrendering his rights and freedom to a certain body of individuals if that body should take up the responsibility of his preservation and the well-being of the group in general. This was the birth of government. The individuals in society made over their rights and freedom to a determinate body of individuals and agreed to obey the commands of the body. Although the practice must have been in vogue since the beginnings of history, the recorded growth of such thought and practice we find in the 17th century England and Continent. The pioneers who critically studied the subject are Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. Hobbes holds that the absolute surrender of authority to the sovereign was required to hold the artificial unity of society together. Locke limits the authority o

government and gives better recognition to the individual rights. In Rousseau's hands the theory becomes fundamentally democratic and the claim is made that the people as a whole shall rule in fact as well as in name. Thus the transition from Hobbes to Rousseau is a transition from absolute monarchy to democracy, from a subordination of individual rights to a stress on individual values. For assuring his social and political integrity man first began by surrendering his individual freedom; but as his sense of obedience evolved and method of organisation developed, he shifted the emphasis to the exercise of individual values. All the same he had to recognise the principle of abiding by the dictates of the organisation whether the demands came from an outside body or from himself. However the shifting of the 'centre of gravity' from outside to inside evidences a spiritual growth in man. Spiritual values inherent in the individual assumed added importance, and their strengthening was thought not only to pave for social strength but essential for social consolidation. Hence it is that genuine democracy is a spiritual testament. But such emphasis of man's intrinsic worth was not viewed in their ultimate perspective, as helping man's spiritual unfoldment. This can be achieved by an organisation where man's intrinsic potentialities would receive a spiritual turn.

*Obedience helps the aspirant's self-unfoldment.*

Religious organisations thus have an important place in the history of human development. Even as he entered into social contract with others for the promotion of safety and social ends, man enters here into a

'spiritual contract' with his superiors; for in them is enshrined the wealth of spiritual traditions bequeathed by the builders and feeders of the organization. Thus an aspirant who joins a religious institution especially an Order, comes to realise that he is heir to a rich wealth of traditions. But he cannot hope to make such riches his own without an all-out obedience to those traditions and to the rules and regulations of the Order. It is the aspiration for such riches that has brought him into the Order. And so obedience to the rules of the organisation is really obedience to the call from within the aspirant to share in a wider spiritual life. It is in this sense that we say that the path of obedience is one of self-unfoldment. Here the aspirant fulfils two demands; one from within and another from without. Obedience to the call of his inner spiritual being to join in a wider divine life merges in his obedience to the laws of the organisation. Such obedience then will be no abandonment of the duties of forming and defending his own convictions. On the contrary, it will rest upon the recognition of his individual right of judgment as also of the statutory laws of the Order, both essential for the preservation and growth of the organisation as also the spiritual freedom of the individual. In no case, however, is the individual really free, for while he is regarded as sufficiently intelligent to propose tasks for his own will, he is assumed to be still spiritually dependent and immature. The hand, for instance, cannot impose its own tasks. Can the foot be really free from the body and yet be the foot? If the foot were to be ignorant of its dependence on the body and be elated by self-love and self-independence and if it were to come to know that it belonged to the

body on which it depended how much shame and regret it should feel for being disloyal to the very source of its life? And with what submission would it allow itself to be governed by the will which rules the body, even to consenting if necessary to be cut off rather than losing its character as a member. Any member must be quite willing to perish for the body for which alone the whole is.

'The term organisation', says Swami Vivekananda, 'means division of labour. Each does his own part and all the parts taken together express an ideal of harmony.' An organisation to express such an ideal of harmony must be self-directing and self-co-ordinating. Every limb must feel physically and spiritually at one with the whole and every limb without exception must abide by the dictates of the central co-ordinating intelligence. The hand has no brain of its own to direct it, except the brain in the head. And that brain knows what is best for every limb. What is borne in on us is the supreme necessity of merging the individual will of the part in the will of the whole for the healthy and effective functioning of the organisation as also for the fulfilment of the part.

### Obedience as spiritual Sadhana

Obedience of the above variety is also a preeminently efficient means of spiritual *sadhana* as it makes for the member's realisation of himself not as his own small self but as the whole organisation and in time as the universe itself. Such experience is the *summum bonum* of spiritual life for the transformation of the solitary mystic into the social self is of the very essence of religious experience.

That self-effacing devotion and obedience to the Order to which the member belongs alone can bring about the spiritual identity of the two by flooding the member's being with the life-blood of the Mother institution is born testimony to by the life of many a realised soul. No half-hearted homage or lukewarm conformity to discipline can irrigate the novice's being with divine grace. According to the author of the *Imitation of Christ* the one who shirks obedience forfeits divine grace: 'My son, he that endeavoureth to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraweth himself from Grace.' And the disobedient, he says, are naturally spiritually bankrupt: 'He that doth not cheerfully and freely submit himself to his superior, it is a sign that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient unto him but often times kicketh and murmureth against him.' Thomas A. Kempis assures the aspirant that through obedience he can conquer even his inner enemy: 'Learn thou, therefore, quickly to submit thyself to thy superior, if thou desire to keep thine own flesh under the yoke. For more speedily is the outward enemy overcome, if the inward man be not laid waste.'

### Confers sovereign spiritual virtues.

'A thoroughgoing monastic discipline', says Evelyn Underhill, 'is the most searching school of virtue ever invented.' It amasses in time all the sovereign spiritual virtues. 'It withers easy-going piety and "other-worldliness" at the root. It confers a robust humility which is proof against all mortifications and disappointments. It leaves no room for individual tastes and preferences, religious or secular. Its pupils must learn to resent nothing, to demand

nothing ; to love and serve all without distinction ; even to renounce the special consolations of religion. The common idea of the cloister as providing a career of impressive religious ceremonial varied by plain sewing, pious gossip, and "devotionettes" is far from the truth. On its external side a well-ordered convent provides a busy practical family life of the most austere kind, with many duties both domestic and religious, countless demands on patience, good-temper, and unselfishness and few relaxations. On its hidden side it is a device to train and toughen the spirit, develop its highest powers, and help it to concentrate its attention more and more completely on eternal realities. That training is still given in its completeness ; and the classic saintly character is still being produced with its special cultivation of love ; meekness, and self-sacrifice balanced by energy, courage and strength of will.' Such all-round development of the man's personality is a rare achievement ; but often the spiritual traditions of a religious organisation make for such uniform growth.

#### *Helps an all-round growth*

The Order which Swami Vivekananda brought into being after the ideas and ideals set before him by the

life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna is an instance in point. Sri Ramakrishna was one of those rare persons who pressed into service all the paths of spiritual progress, *Jnana*, *Bhakti*, *Karma* and *Yoga*. Swami Vivekananda wanted that the organisation which commemorated his *guru* must be a genuine replica of his many-sided spiritual genius and must produce many-sided spiritual personalities like him. He was not only particular to see that the intellectual, the active, the devotional and *yogic* types who came to the Order must all in abounding measure receive upliftment but was also keen upon urging in aspirants the intellectual, the emotional and active springs to form a synthesis. The Mission has been fulfilling these behests of its creator to an ever-increasing degree.

It was Clement of Alexandria who said, 'the living church is the body of Christ.' Any Church for that matter can be made truly living and vibrant with the spirit of the Master, only by viewing it and serving it as the embodiment of the great Master himself. By such service the members share in the divine activity and ascend to divinity as well as make the organisation an effective and efficient divine instrument for the service of humanity.

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To bear all cheerfully, do all bravely, await occasions, hurry never, in a word, to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common :—this is to be my symphony.

—W. H. Channing.

## SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY \*

Charles Baudouin

The comparison between Western thought and Hindu wisdom is engaging the attention of many at the present time. But it seems difficult to realise that the similarities are not obvious. Also the efforts in this direction are no more than the first steps; they do not go far enough. This consideration should lead us to perfect rather than ignore them.

The small book that I have recently received *Spiritualité indienne et Science occidentale* (Indian Spirituality and Western Science) by E. Techoueyres (published by Delachaux and Niestle, Neuchatel, 1940) deserves, in this respect, our careful consideration. The author, who is the Principal of the Medical College at Rheims, has a scientific bent of mind which he never forgets; he gives preference to the school of savants who have reflected deeply on their science and made philosophical contributions in this respect such as Houssay, Carrel and Pavlov. And it is thus equipped that he handles the subject of the spirituality of India.

We shall follow him in his inquiry or rather we shall trace our route according to the stages marked by him, supplying the transitions he seems to us to have neglected and completing his interesting exploration wherever necessary.

M. Techoueyres has at the very start found a first meeting ground between Hindu thought and our science. Is not Maya the initial point in Hindu thought, Maya, the consciousness of the universal illusion, the

conviction that all that charms or hurts our senses is nothing but the appearance of the being and not the being? Our science also, in its own way, has come to the same conclusion, science which commences by reducing the sounds and colours to imperceptible vibrations and ends by substituting the play of abstract forces for matter. The tangible world in which we believe we are moving appears to the scientist as a product of that subjectivity which he repudiates above all. We can very soon join the critique of Kant if we follow this route. This is not quite new, but it is useful to recall this. It would not be in vain to emphasise the coincidence of this critique of Kant with the ancient poetic theory of Maya. Both agree in negating all things and affirming that the being is something other than what it appears to be.

We can say that science demonstrates Maya. It forces us out of our subjectivity, the false perspective, partial and limited, arising from the fact that we are installed in a body and in the ego.

But we have to add that western science, in its attitude of neutrality with regard to the moral life, does not free us, except intellectually, from the partiality born of our ego: it does not incite us to do so morally. We may remark in passing that there is here a position whose paradox deserves scrutiny. This moral neutrality which emerges as a corollary of the principle of the objectivity of our science prevents us from being definitely victorious over our crafty

\* Translated by Sri P. Seshadri Iyer, B. A., M. L., of the Travancore University from the original French article contributed to the *Vedanta Kesari*.

subjectivity ; it does not deliver us from egoism. So much so that this neutrality like many other things is at bottom only a deceit. It is here that Hindu thought rightly intervenes. The latter does not so much care to demonstrate Maya. It affirms it ; it has been convinced of its truth for many milleniums. But that which matters in regard to that conviction is that it has constructed a wisdom on it and this wisdom rests in the renunciation of oneself and one's egoism as the vainest of all illusions. Thus the course of Hindu spirituality is a natural continuation of that of our science.

Further, Maya does not signify the negation of the world and the wisdom which flows from it does not lead to a devaluation and disdain of all. It is Tartuffe who looks at the world as rubbish. The sage, according to the Indian conception, should not only be capable of placing all things on the same plane, but must also value the least of them in the same manner as he esteems all others. 'The man who is truly holy' says Rabindranath Tagore is he who has no disdain for anything. (Quoted by Techoueyres, P. 86). He should revise the code of values established by common interest. He should, above all, know that value does not reside in things ; we attribute it to them ; we draw it from the depth of our own being. The very charming analogue of the musk-deer illustrates this : 'There was once a musk-deer in the mountains, which haunted by a certain musk-odour tickling its nostrils ran from jungle to jungle to find out its source. It was exhausted by its wanderings without food, drink and sleep. One day, harassed by fatigue, it slipped from a rock and fell mortally wounded. In its last movement it

rolled on the ground and licked its breast. While doing so its nostrils struck against the sack of musk whose perfume it attempted to breathe in. But it was too late. It had striven to search for that which it had carried all along in itself (cited on page 90).

But this movement of a return to ourselves is always very soon corrected by a movement somewhat inverse, which prevents us from seeking our profound being in our illusory self inclined to egoism. A close criticism is directed against the error of individuation. That criticism can, among others, be expressed in terms of our science. The latter does not emphasise the arbitrary aspect which individualises a being, assigning to him his limits though the external sphere no less than the internal, is the condition of his life, and is in this respect an integral part of himself. Frederic Boussay says nothing more in his refined language. 'If I meet a great oak, I see it, I recognise it among other things, I distinguish it. Undoubtedly, we also know that the qualities it possesses are not its own. Its verdure which strikes us would not exist if the sun had not shone on it all through the spring and summer. Since two or three centuries the extinct radiations have thickened the branches of the oak and we can see them again in fire if we will. At every moment some water-vapour, oxygen and carbonic acid, which have been incorporated in the old tree, are diffused far and wide ; at every instant, some oxygen returns and some carbon goes back to the atmosphere and at no time can we say whether they belong to the external air or have become the substance of the tree.' (Frederik Houssay's '*Force and Cause*' Flammarion Paris, Paris,

1920 —page 34, quoted by Techoueyres P. 29).

It is salutary to apply this critique to our own being. If we do it thoroughly we shall find that our ego is the great source of all our errors.

'We should not give credence to that very old friend, born and growing with us constituting our personal self. It is a great maker of disorder: encamped in the full centre of informations, it makes a fantastic choice among the latter, distinguishing those which are agreeable to it, from those which are unpleasant, cutting and recutting as it wishes, not caring for that which it deems useless to its desires and retaining nothing but the peculiarities which assure to it some advantage for the exercise of an easy domination. The constant deformation which it inflicts on all knowledge is the expression of its deep-rooted egoism, which deforms the truth and constrains it to live in perpetual error.'

It is the ego which by taking care to protect itself and guard itself from all confusion, creates the idea of separation between men, between nations and between things, (P. 45.)

If we free ourselves from the network of illusions and examine thoroughly the nature of our being, we shall find, according to the well-known Hindu doctrine, our petty ego giving place more and more to the Over-Soul, to the Great All, the ultimate Reality. It is this that the following parable, among many others, expresses.

'There was once a salt doll which, recollecting its origin, wished one day to go back to the ocean. When it had reached the ocean, the elements of the salt disappeared in the water. The doll dissolved in the ocean bit by bit and lost itself in the close union

of the substances wherefrom it had taken its form. It could not return to tell the mysteries of the deep ocean.'

Such is the cycle of thoughts in which the small book of M. Techoueyres moves. For our part we regret that he is rather satisfied by placing side by side the principles of Western Science and those of Hindu Spirituality in the closing chapters of his book without really pushing forward the attempt to compare and reconcile both. The idea of a 'deceiving ego' that he disentangles in passing could have been further elucidated and placed in a more central position, because in our opinion it is the link by which the two planes can be united. However, the problem has been set by him and we can have a glimpse of how it could be solved. Here we shall take leave of our guide and try to follow the line he has suggested to us. It seems that if we experience some difficulties in connecting these two terms, viz., Western Science and Hindu Spirituality, we can be powerfully aided by a third term, viz., Western Spirituality. This latter is exceptionally instructive, when it has flourished in a mind that has fully known and transcended the progress of science. Now, there is one in whom all these conditions meet in an eminent degree: we mean our Pascal.

It was but yesterday that we had appreciated this exact and brilliant genius, his passionate and austere rigour, this rare combination of 'geometry, finesse,' reason and heart. Would it be astonishing if we invoke once again that great witness? In fact the problem which must engage us is rather Science and Spirituality and the expressions Western or Indian are, after all, secondary. At a

certain stage we are struck at seeing how all the expressions of spirituality unite. Romain Rolland in his '*Vivekananda*' has worked out the curious and admirable meeting of Indian mysticism and Christian mysticism.

To return to Pascal. We can say that he is the royal road. The way of holiness, followed by the illustrious Spiritual masters, deserves to be studied in the comparative aspect. Also when Sainte-Beuve traces the singular character of M. Renan, the physician who had become an ascetic, the Franciscan model of humility and voluntary poverty—wrote that the wonderful M. Renan was so to say a 'Brahman.'

Is it then so paradoxical to affirm that Pascal moved in a cycle of ideas sufficiently near to that which we are traversing? It has to be observed that his own 'ascetic practice,' his 'Yoga' consisted in mortifying the ego. But in what manner? Open once more the book of *Pensees* (composed by Pascal). 'Self is hateful.' Thus writes Pascal in his celebrated book. But why is it hateful? Is it only due to its lack of consideration for others; to the inconveniences it inflicts on others? If it is nothing but that, the evil would be remediable. But it is a deeper and more essential evil.' The self is hateful because it is unjust, because it makes itself the centre of all. And Pascal continues, 'What a perversion of judgment that everyone places himself above the rest of the world and prefers his own good and the continuance of his good fortune and life to that of the rest of the world.' Mark the expression 'perversion of judgment' that is to say, that this perversion before being a moral scandal is first and foremost a scandal for the intellect. It is from this point o

view that the ego is partial. We can say that it works by a lack of justness more than by a lack of justice. The ego makes itself the centre of all exactly as the earth seems to be the centre of the world or as our senses impose on us in all things their subjective aspect. It is the savant in Pascal who takes offence, or at least the moralist in him who thinks in terms of the savant. Mind and heart being set right, he has courage even when the path traverses and wounds the ego and its instincts; this is in short the march of *jnana*. Science corrects the senses which are unfair in their subjectivity. In the same manner it is the duty of morals or of grace to correct egoism.

Pascal can be well understood if we recognise that in his works the moral propositions are a transposition of the scientific ones on the plane of the will.

It is indeed the mathematician in him who observes: 'We do not trouble ourselves about being esteemed in the town through which we pass. But if we are to remain a little while there we are so concerned. How long is it necessary? A time commensurate with our vain and paltry life.' It is the mathematician again who sees in human vanity the progress *ad infinitum*. 'Every one likes to have his admirers. Even philosophers wish for them. Those who write against it want to have the glory of having written it well and those who read it desire the glory of having read it. I who write this have perhaps this desire and perhaps those who will read it.' In the same manner, the celebrated development of the two infinitives of extension transposing themselves easily, one on the other, illustrates no less, the double abyss of greatness and pettiness which constitute man.

Now we can see that it is by a tangible transposition that Pascal deals with the processes of the ego.

This 'perverted judgment, this scandalous logic, denounced once, is regarded by Pascal as an unbelievable aberration and the proof of a "fall". We are born unjust, because all tends to the ego. This is contrary to all order. We must consider the general good. The propensity to self is the beginning of all disorder, in war, in politics, in economics and even in the body of man. The will is therefore depraved. Moreover we can say that this perversion of judgment is not only a result and a proof of the fall, but that in itself is the fall. We can say without pressing the matter too much and without deviating far from the texts of Pascal, that the fall consists in individuation, in the act by which the 'hateful self' separates itself from all and opposes itself to all : in one word, in the division of the being. This ruling idea enlightens further a thought like this (which it would be well to compare with the preceding).

*Adam Forma Future* : The six days (of the genesis) are necessary to form the Seventh day of Repose ; the six ages to form the new age. The six days which Moses represent for the formation of Adam are only the picture of the six ages to form Jesus Christ and the Church. If Adam had not sinned and Jesus Christ had not come, there would have been only one covenant ; only one age of men and creation would have been represented as accomplished at one single time.

We are here very near the myth of a 'part Osiris.' The absolute is the totality ; the relative is a portion ; the fall is the passage from the one to the other. It is rarely that morality is founded simply and strongly

on the recognition of the fact that the ego is a part of the whole, a member of the body according to the robust expression of St. Paul. It is the fable of Menanans Agrippa regarding the other members of the body and the stomach, but freed from its political meanness and raised to metaphysical dignity. And the definition of conversion is founded on that. It is the point where the self discovers that it is but a part of the whole. Mark well the veritable eloquence of the thought given below :

'We must love God only and hate the self. If the foot had always been ignorant that it belonged to the body on which it depended ; if it had only had the knowledge and the love of self and if it came to know that it belonged to a body on which it depended, what regret, what shame, for its past life for having been useless to the body which inspired its life, which would have annihilated it if it had rejected it and separated it from itself apart from the body ? What prayers it would make for its preservation in it ? And with what submission would it allow itself to be governed by the will which rules the body, even to consenting if necessary to be cut off or it would lose its character as member. For every member must be quite willing to perish for the body for which alone the whole is.' From our reflections on to reflections it may be thought that we have gone away from the small book of M. Techoueyres, which has been the occasion of these meditations. I believe however that we have remained only within the boundaries of the problem, and have indicated how we could dive deep taking as our guide, our *Guru*, one of our great french authors, who was one of the most active geniuses of Science before he became one of the truest witnesses of the soul.

## MYTHOLOGY AND MODERNISM

Dr. K. C. Varadachari, M.A., Ph. D.

It is usual to define mythology in modern times. It is considered to be the hand-maid of superstition which like its comrade mysticism invades only primitive minds. It is declared to belong to the 'Tribal Horizon' that preceded the 'Prophetic Horizon' according to Dr. John Murphy, the Professor of Comparative Religion, Manchester University. The Tribal horizon is given to strong imagination; it is mythopoetic and given to dramatization; using images it aims at wish-fulfilment through dramatic imitation rather than prolonged thought. Indeed Professor Bergson has also stated that since imagination is one of those strong traits of the primitive man by which he conjures up perhaps more fears than joys, raises up more spirits than ever can people the globe, it must be considered to be different in kind from the imagination which we call scientific and logical, involving abstract thought and concepts and an awareness of the ethical principles involved in abstract justice, love and law. He calls this the myth-making function which is a *virtual instinct*. This myth-making function which is considered to be the primitive method of response, instinctive and not intelligent, hangs round the edge of intelligence as fringe. We must also know that instinct strives to preserve the social fabric or solidarity whereas intelligence, seeking individuality, almost seeks to break up this solidarity. But as Nature is more concerned with society, than with the individual, we find that in advanced societies wherein intelligence has assumed the prominent and dominant role, the solidarity of

society is sought to be achieved in two ways; through the virtuality of the instinct as myth-making function, or through intelligent planning. But more often than not the more elemental force gathers strength and the residue of instinct which survives on the fringe of intelligence, which cannot exercise direct action however, informs intelligence and side-tracks and defeats the intelligence itself. There is strength in this manifestation, but it is a strength that diverts or deviates the course of ascent of *elan*. As such it is something to be carefully guarded against. Mythology is a substitute for action, even as drama or poetry may be considered to be. This is the general thesis of Bergson.

We must note in this connection, that intelligence is as much social as instinct, but its methodology of integration of social life is radically distinguished from the animal organization—which works on the principle of an invisible *anastomosis*, especially amongst the bees, white ants and ants. But what intelligence seeks is the free intercourse of minds based on intelligence. Another act of the matter that has to be noted about mythology, or rather when one takes up the mythological as real, is what has not been considered. We know that the best example of mythology which has developed at great and prolific length after having reached the horizon prophetic is Hinduism. Other mythologies have undoubtedly been prior to the proliferation of thought which discovered the One Unity of the Divine in the abstract concepts of Rta, Brahman, Vak, as what in Greek philosophy the Being,

the Nous, the principle of love, repulsion, attraction, and cause. The Hindu thought, it is said, fell down to the ritual mysticism during the period of the Brahmanas but resuscitated itself during the period of the Upanisads which again underwent a development in Buddhism on the one side and degradation in popular Hinduism in the other. Later however it again lifted itself up in the pure philosophy of Sankara, where the concepts of mythology were completely ruled out and thought in its sheer conceptuality was enthroned. Thus true mysticism—conceptual mysticism of intelligence became the pinnacle of our philosophy.

We must ask ourselves whether this is religion also, for it is constantly stated that 'a religion without God' and mythology would be beyond human mind and intelligence. Religion when it is merely the struggle for liberation from all bonds of perception and practical conduct undoubtedly does not need a God for its attainment. Thought in its rigid self-introspection and attaining the supreme concept through negation of all that it is not, will have arrived at that final concept through supreme effort of thought itself. As Plato stated it 'Religion is the consummation of wisdom in self-knowledge'. Philosophy ends in the vision of the eternal Ideas or Idea. But theology looks to the Knowledge of God. Religion should embrace both. Thus wrote Paul Elmer More interpreting the *Religion of Plato*.

Thus we find that philosophical thought finally realizes the highest concept. It is the business of Religion in a sense to make that concept the guiding star of our conduct in relation to ourselves and in relation to others. This involves the belief in the

possibility of the application of that High Concept into practical life which is social. The universal dispersal of this concept into each and everything, or what is known as the sense of pervasion of all creatures by the Divine which makes them our own selves, one with us, is possible only through theology. How has the One become the Many? The problems of philosophy are the realizations of the impossibilities of conceptual solutions. It would perhaps not do to say that 'All things are full of mystery (*ainigmaton*), both in poets and in philosophers. And for my part, I like rather their spirit of reverence towards the truth than the boldness of the moderns. For of matters dimly perceived by human weakness the more becoming interpreter is Mythology' said Maximus of Tyre.

Theology without mythology leads to a strange production. But have we no criterion by which we could understand mythology? Is it not likely that there are two kinds of mythologies as I have hinted, the mythology that proceeds from the height of intellectual Understanding and the mythologies which are fancies and fantasies of minds seeking the satisfaction, through day-dreaming and dramatization, which are substitutes for action and thought in its rigid logical spin? The failure of most thinkers later on to understand the mythological references in the Vedic and Brahmanic literature (for even at the stage of the Brahmanas we find the lack of a sure understanding of the original figures, resulting in numerological mysticism, ritual mysticism, and sacrificial mysticism, must be considered tragic. The Upanisads, especially the smaller ones, gave up the pursuit of mythology whilst the Pura-

men involved themselves in continuous mazes. There is a tragedy in the myth-making function, which whilst it seeks to illustrate a profound experience,—and where it is not merely for the sake of story-weaving or mere dramatization, and is didactic, different from the kind even there from the stories known to us as Pancatantra it proceeds from a level altogether different from the 'fringe' of instinct that hangs to the intelligence.

We should proceed on certain assured lines in respect of mythology. It would not be wrong to deny that, after all, language seeks to represent experience of the physical objects. The interrelationships, which we observe, between objects give rise in intellectual beings of lower order just the realization of that particular relationship between two similar objects and nothing more. He is particular-minded. But a higher intelligence would be able to deal with any two objects provided the relationship is perceived. The intelligence focusses itself not on objects but on the relationships. It is possible that the myth-making function seizes upon this aspect of intelligence, and at once encloses it in its dramatization and novel-constructions,—constructiveness being also an instinct. This is to particularise the relationships. Escaping from this particularising of the relationships intelligence seeks to discover the rationale of all relationships and seeking to minimise its multitude. This the myth-making function finds it difficult to follow up. But it has also its substitute simulacrum, the *mana*, the Numinous of Rudolf Otto; but as will be seen this is a power not a concept, and not a relationship. But thought also attains a virtual abandonment of all relationships in the totally

Absolute Relationless Existence, within or without according to some mystical thinkers like Sankara and Bradley, but some philosophers hold that it is the internally related Absolute. Thus we are pressed to accept the mythological or instinctively mythological figure of a universal power on the one hand, and on the other, a concept of highest value to thought or intelligence. Religion as Theology had to solve the riddle, and it tried it by reducing power to the level of Avidya, subordinate to the concept, which is the Vidya.

Philosophy may be forced to evaluate and superevaluate the conceptual understanding of reality, where the concepts may have an essential existence or more properly non-existence ; but it is true that theology or the science of God has either to transvalue the concepts by revealing these concepts as intrinsic to experience or else discover a host of other concepts which will reveal the laws of the consciousness known as religious, which is persistent and elemental, to which man reverts after each defeat of thought, and from which he escapes only to be reminded of the reality fundamental to experience. It is in mythology that this elemental structure of reality is retained and acts as the powerful lever to conduct. But the dangers of an unenlightened mythology or an escape-mythology are great, and would profoundly affect our ascent into rational existence and through it to a spiritualised and divinised consciousness. It is the business of a philosophy of religion to rescue the discrimination, never wanting in the ancients, but which has been cut adrift and lost in the movement of history that has but preserved that which was as near aboriginal as possible. The value of a critical ana-

lysis of mythology which would sift the true from the mass of untrue and instinctive rationalisations would be enormous. But what shall we be guided by in this effort? it may be asked. Our answer is that the apparatus we shall construct shall not be merely the 'consensus of opinion' or agreed-similarities of the manifestations of the mystico-mythological fancy all over the world. Indeed the solar mythologism that prevailed in all periods and in all stages of mankind will point to the grave dangers of linking up the advanced with the primitive manifestations of the Solar-Myth. Nor should there be the obsession that all that the Puranas in the East and higher religions are true and have to be accepted till disproved. Rather it should be the other way about. In the name of super-spiritual experience the ancient fancies come in and are spread by the followers with a zeal and pseudo-rationality that imperils the fuller and finer understanding of pure mysticism. The 'eduction' or drawing out of the rational and causal principles and morphological principles from the structure of spiritual experiences of every order to which eminently belong the mythologies of higher religion, is the desideratum. The concept of Avatar for instance, is a crucial example of the grace of the Divine

illustrated in a variety of ways as the incarnation of the Divine as Son, as Lord Saviour, or Teacher and Prophet, in almost all the Higher Religions. The mythical stories woven round these figures, conceptualised or otherwise, and the creation of personas about them bearing names strongly reminiscent of the part they play in the eternal drama of individual life are palpably patent.

The truth is that the human mind is, as intelligence, rational; it will revert to reason provided it is given the chance. But it is also willing to experiment with truth and learn from the errors of its ways, and be stronger and more vigorous for every renewed adventure. It also probes and learns. Mythology of the higher order always whets its explorative fantasy; and the business of a philosopher may be, as M. Bergson has come to see in his last work, forced to clear the path of torrential mystic force of all the weeds of 'closing mythos', not indeed of *all* mythology,—for his story reads like a Modern Myth of the Elan Vital with its threefold *vyuhas* of instinct, intelligence and intuition,—but of all that have the inherent power of enclosing and stepping down the energy of growth of more and more widening consciousness.

A Science and Philosophy of mythology thus seems to be necessary.

Like a piece of iron between two magnets, so does the human soul waver between divine and earthly things, and between belief and feeling.

Its purity consists solely in withdrawing itself from the love of things earthly, and in voluntary flight to God.

—Savonarola.

## MAGNIFICENCE OF DIVINE NAME

Like a royal umbrella and jewelled diadem over all the other letters of the alphabet shine the two consonants in Rama's name. Both name and form are shadows of the Lord, who, rightly understood, is unspeakable and uncreated. They are sometimes wrongly distinguished as greater and less, but the wise will understand my explanation of the difference between them. See, now, the form is subordinate to the name, for without the name you cannot come to a knowledge of the form ; if the very form be in your hand, still without knowing the name it is not recognised; but meditate on the name without seeing the form, and your soul is filled with devotion. The mystery of name and form is unspeakable and cannot be told, but delightful to those who have intuition of it ; the name acting as a witness between the material and immaterial form of the Deity, and being a guide and interpreter to both.

Place the name of Rama as a jewelled lamp at the door of your lips and there will be light, as you will, both inside and out.

As his tongue repeats this name, the ascetic wakes to life, his thoughts free from passion and all detached from the world ; he enjoys the incomparable felicity of God, who is unspeakable, unblemished, without either name or form. Those who would understand mysteries, by repeating this name understand them. Those who repeat it when burdened with affliction are freed from their troubles and become happy. Thus there are in the world four kinds of Rama-worshippers, all four good, holy, and beneficent ; but of these four sages, they are the most dear to the

Lord who wisely rely upon his name. His name is great in the four Vedas and in all the ages of the world, but in this fourth age especially there is no other hope.

The one immortal, true, sentient, complete, and blissful Brahman is all-pervading ; yet though such an unchangeable lord is in our very soul, the whole creation is in slavery and wretchedness, till he is revealed in definite shape, and is energized by the name ; as a jewel is not valued till it is so called.

Thus the virtue of the name is infinite and transcends the supreme, and in my judgment is greater than Rama himself.

From the love that he bore to his followers, Rama took the form of a man and by himself enduring misery secured their happiness. By incessantly and devoutly repeating his name, all the faithful may attain to felicity. Rama himself redeemed only one woman, the ascetic's wife ; but his name has corrected the errors of millions of sinners. In his own person Rama broke the bow of Siva, but his glorious name has broken the fear of death ; the Lord himself restored to life only the forest of Dandaka, but his name has sanctified countless generations ; the son of Raghu destroyed many demons, but his name has destroyed all the evil of the world.

Rama as all men know, extended his protection to Sugriva and Vibhishana ; but his name has protected countless supplicants, shining forth gloriously in the world and Veda. Rama killed in battle Ravana and all his family, and returned with Sita to his own city, his capital, while gods and saints hymned his praises ; but

his servants if only they affectionately meditate on his name, have no difficulty in vanquishing the whole army of error, and absorbed in devotion live at ease without even a dream of sorrow.

By the power of this name even the great Siva, acquired immortality; by the power of this name Sukadeva, Sanat-Kumara and all saints, sages and ascetics have enjoyed heavenly raptures: Narada too acknowledged its power, himself as dear to Hara and Hari as Hari is dear to the world; by repeating this name Prahlad, through the Lord's grace, became the crown of the faithful; Dhruva in his distress repeated the name of Hari, and was rewarded by a fixed and incomparable station in the heavens; by meditating on his holy name Hanuman won and kept the affection of Rama; by the power of Hari's name Ajamila and the elephant and the harlot all three obtained salvation; why further extend the list? not even the incarnate Rama could exhaust it.

The name of Rama is as the tree of paradise, the centre of all that is good in this wicked world; and whoever

meditates upon it becomes (says Tulsi Das) transformed as it were from a vile hemp-stick into a sweet-smelling tulsi plant.

In all four ages of the world, in all time, past, present or future, in the three spheres of earth, heaven and hell, any creature that repeats this name becomes blessed. This is the verdict of the Veda, Puranas and all the saints—that love of Rama is the fruit of all virtue. In the first age, contemplation; in the second ago, sacrifice; in the Dvapara age, temple-worship was the appointed propitiation; but in this vile and impure iron age, where the soul of man floats like a fish in an ocean of sin, in these fearful times, the name is the only tree of life, and by meditating on it all commotion is stilled. In these evil days neither good deeds, nor piety, nor spiritual wisdom is of any avail but only the name of Rama; his name is, as it were, the wisdom and the might of Hanuman to expose and destroy the Kalanemi-like wiles of the wicked world.—(Extracted from Growse's translation of *Tulsidas Ramayana*).

## A RESUME OF THE GITA FROM THE VISISHTADVAITIC STANDPOINT

*By Swami Adidevananda*

In the following paragraphs an attempt is made to give a resume of the teachings of the Bhagavadgita based on the *Gitarthasangraha*, an important work of Sri Yamunacharya, the forerunner and spiritual preceptor of Sri Ramanujacharya.

### INTRODUCTION

The core of the Gita's teachings is that the highest Self—Parabrahman—is the goal to be attained by all beings,

and the Supreme Divine can be reached only by the Path of Love known as Bhaktiyoga. The first step is Karmayoga, the dedication of all actions to God with complete self-abnegation. The second is Jnanayoga, the knowledge of the true nature of the individual soul and of the nature of God. By performing one's own ordained duties in a selfless and impersonal manner, the aspirant

attains the purity of mind which would facilitate his power of concentration ; he would then comprehend the relation between the individual soul and the Divine which is preliminary to the highest realization.

The Gita which contains eighteen chapters is divided into three closely connected books each consisting of six chapters. In the first book, Karmayoga and Jnanayoga are examined and developed ; both the paths lead to the tranquillity of mind and finally to the individual salvation if they are followed without any idea of reward or attachment. In the second or the central book, comprising chapters from seventh to twelfth, Bhaktiyoga is taught and explained as the way to final beatitude ; both Karmayoga and Jnanayoga, related in the first six chapters, are only steps to Bhaktiyoga. The last or the third book examines and reviews the doctrines propounded in the first twelve chapters and explains the nature of the Supreme Brahman which is the real source of the cosmic existence formed by the union of soul and matter.

### I

Arjuna, whose duty in life was that of war and protection, was deeply affected by false love and compassion towards his friends and relations ; he thought that the battle of Kurukshetra which involved massacre and bloodshed on a wide-scale was wrong and unjustified. He was smitten with great dejection and took refuge in Sri Krishna, the Divine Charioteer, for enlightenment. Thus the Divine Teacher introduced the teachings of the Gita to his human disciple to remove the confusion of his moral and ethical problems.

For removing the ethical illusion and sentimentalism of the disciple, the Teacher of the Gita first taught in the second chapter the knowledge relating to the nature of soul and matter. Life subsists in a chaos of ephemeral forces. Our material bodies are constantly changing and dying. Wise men neither grieve for the living nor for the dead.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, the Atman is ever changeless and indestructible. Verily, at no time was he (the Bhagavan) non-existent, nor Arjuna, nor those kings.<sup>2</sup> As the embodied soul experiences in the body, childhood, youth and old age, so he passes on to another body ; tranquil souls are not grieved thereat.<sup>3</sup> The matter has no existent reality. The soul never ceases to be.<sup>4</sup> These bodies have an end with respect to the eternal, indestructible and illimitable Atman.<sup>5</sup> Atman is unborn, eternal and changeless. It is not slain when the body is slain.<sup>6</sup> As a man casting out worn-out garments, puts on new ones, so the indwelling Atman casting off worn-out bodies enters into new bodies.<sup>7</sup>

After giving an important metaphysical truth regarding the nature of the indweller of the body, namely, the Atman and the nature of the performance of disinterested work, the Teacher goes on to describe on that basis the state of the Sthitaprajna, the man of steady wisdom, which leads to the tranquillity of mind. The wise man does not take a 'moral holiday' from works and action ; for, he knows that he has a right only for action, never to its fruits.<sup>8</sup> For men of the world the action is conditioned by the dualities of relative good and evil. But the Sthitaprajna, fixed in Yoga, performs the action, having become equal in success and failure ; for it is equality of mind that is

meant by Yoga.<sup>9</sup> When all beings are in sleep and in the darkness of ignorance, the Muni is wide awake by his luminous power of knowledge. The life of contradictions and dualities which is day to earth-bound people is to him night.<sup>10</sup> He is a wide ocean of consciousness which is not affected by every inrush of desire. He attains to peace, into whom all the desires enter as rivers into the sea.<sup>11</sup> For, while people are disturbed by the sense of mine and thine, he has no 'I' or 'Mine'.<sup>12</sup> He attains to eternal peace and is not bewildered by the passing show of things. This state is called the Brahmi Sthiti, the Brahmi state, as he is firmly fixed in Brahman.<sup>13</sup>

In the third chapter it is taught that the Gunas of Prakriti perform all actions and the deluded man thinks that he is the doer.<sup>14</sup> Further on it is continued that one should do the work for the guidance of the world without any attachment.<sup>15</sup> Every act has to be done in a spirit of sacrifice or with spiritual motive,<sup>16</sup> as 'Yajna is Vishnu himself'. Even if the aspirant is fit to embark immediately on Jnanayoga, he should necessarily perform work without attachment for the well-being of the world. Finally he should understand that the power of actions not only rests in the Gunas, but also, ultimately, in the Supreme Lord himself.

In the fourth chapter it is pointed out that selfless performance of works may itself be styled as Jnanayoga, though it may not be the classical Jnanayoga, and while performing works the knowledge-element is the only one that matters. He who sees inaction (Jnana) in action and action (Karma) in inaction (Jnana), he is wise among men, he is a Yogi and has accomplished all works.<sup>17</sup> The

knowledge-element is superior to material element in sacrifices. All actions in their entirety end in knowledge.<sup>18</sup> Incidentally the process, purpose and mystery of Divine Incarnation are explained in the beginning of the chapter.<sup>19</sup>

In the fifth chapter the Bhagavan teaches that the abode which is reached by the Jnanins is attained by the Karmayogins also. He sees who sees Jnana and Karma as one.<sup>20</sup> Then it is continued that Karmayoga is more easy to be followed and will be quicker in the attainment of its object.<sup>21</sup> The Yogi who attains this mental attitude not only finds joy, and light within, but also attains to Brahman, gaining absolute bliss and freedom.<sup>22</sup>

The sixth chapter explains the method of practising meditation, the four grades of advanced persons who meditate on the soul and the qualifications necessary for the realization of the Atman. The Blessed Lord assures us that the doer of good never comes to grief even if there is a fall before the attainment of the goal.<sup>23</sup> Finally the chapter concludes with the statement that God-love or Bhakti is higher than all the Yogas. Amongst all the Yogins he is considered to be most superior who with faith merges the inner self in the Lord and worships Him.<sup>24</sup>

Compared with the Yogins of various grades the God-lover occupies a place of paramount importance. He is exceedingly dear to the Lord as he has heart and soul sacrificed himself. So absorbed is he in God-consciousness that he is unable to live even for a moment without the Lord. In a unique manner he touches the lotus-feet of his Beloved. Here ends the first book.

(To be Continued)

1 Bhagavadgita, II. 21. 2 Ibid., II. 12. 3 Ibid., II. 13. 4 Ibid., II. 16.  
 5 Ibid., II. 18. 6 Ibid., II. 20. 7 Ibid., II. 22. 8 Ibid., II. 47. 9 Ibid., II. 49.  
 10 Ibid., II. 69. 11 Ibid., II. 70. 12 Ibid., II. 71. 13 Ibid., II. 72. 14 Ibid., III. 27.  
 15 Ibid., III. 19-20. 16 Ibid., III. 9. 17 Ibid., IV. 18. 18 Ibid., IV. 33. 19 Ibid., IV. 6-9.

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

Sri Ramakrishna's life is presented in the book ("Ramakrishna, His Life and Sayings" by Prof. Max Muller) in very brief and simple language. In this life every word of the weary historian is weighed, as it were, before being put on paper; those sparks of fire, which are seen here and there, to shoot forth in the article, "A Real Mahatman," are, this time, held in with the greatest care. The Professor's boat is here plying between the Scylla of the Christian missionaries on the one hand, and the Charybdis of the tumultuous Brahmos on the other. The article, "A Real Mahatman" brought forth from both the parties many hard words and many carping remarks on the Professor. It is a pleasure to observe that there is neither the attempt made here to retort on them, nor is there any display of meanness—as the refined writers of England are not in the habit of indulging in that kind of things,—but with a sober, dignified, never-the-least malignant, yet firm and thundering voice, worthy of the aged scholar, he has removed the charges that were levelled against some of the out-of-the-common ideas of the great-souled sage,—swelling forth from a heart too deep for ordinary grasp.

And the charges are indeed surprising to us. We have heard the great Minister of the Brahmo Samaj, the late revered Acharya, Sri Keshab Chandra Sen, speaking in his charming way, that Sri Ramakrishna's simple, sweet, colloquial language breathed a superhuman purity; though in his speech could be noticed some such words as we term obscene, the use of those words on account of

his uncommon childlike innocence and of their being perfectly devoid of the least breath of sensualism, instead of being something reproachable, served rather the purpose of embellishment;—yet, this is one of the mighty charges!

Another charge brought against him is that his treatment of his wife was barbarous, because of his taking the vow of leading a Sannyasin's life. To this, the Professor has replied that he took, the vow of Sannyasa with his wife's assent, and that during the years of his life on this earth, his wife, bearing a character worthy of her husband, heartily received him as her *guru* (spiritual guide), and according to his instructions, passed her days in infinite bliss and peace, being engaged in the service of God as a life-long Brahmacharini. Besides, he asks, "Is love between husband and wife, really impossible without the procreation of children?" "We must learn to believe in Hindu honesty"—in the matter that, without having any physical relationship, a Brahmachari husband can live a life of crystal purity, thus making his Brahmacharini wife a partner in the immortal bliss of the highest spiritual realisation, *Brahmanandam*,—"however incredulous we might justly be on such matters in our own country." May blessings shower on the Professor for such worthy remarks! Even he, born of a foreign nationality and living in a foreign land, can understand the meaning of our Brahmacharya, as the only way to the attainment of spirituality, and believes that it is not even in these days, rare in India, whilst the hypo-

critical heroes of our own household are unable to see anything else than carnal relationship, in the matrimonial union !! "As a man thinketh in his mind, so he seeth outside."

Again another charge put forward is that "he did not show sufficient moral abhorrence of prostitutes"—To this, the Professor's rejoinder is very, very sweet indeed; he says that in this charge Ramakrishna "does not stand quite alone among the founders of religion!" Ah ! How sweet are these words,—they remind one of the prostitute Ambapali, the object of Lord Buddha's divine grace, and of the Samaritan woman, who won the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yet again, another charge is that he did not hate those who were intemperate in their habits. Heaven save the mark ! One must not tread even on the shadow of a man, because he took a sip or two of drink,—is not that the meaning ? A formidable accusation, indeed ! Why did not the Mahapurusha kick away and drive off in disgust the drunkards, the prostitutes, the thieves, and all the sinners of the world ! And why did he not, with eyes closed, talk in a set drawl after the never-to-be varied tone of the Indian flute-player, or talk in conventional language concealing his thoughts ! And above all, the crowning charge is, why did he not "live *maritalement*" all his life !!!

Unless life can be framed after the ideal of such strange purity and good manners as set forth by the accusers, India is doomed to go to ruin !! Let her, if she has to rise by the help of such ethical rules !

The greater portion of the book has been devoted to the collection of the sayings, rather than to the life

itself. That those sayings have attracted the attention of many of the English-speaking readers throughout the world, can be easily inferred from the rapid sale of the book. The sayings, falling direct from his holy lips, are impregnate with the strongest spiritual force and power, and therefore they will surely exert their divine influence in every part of the world. "For the good of the many, for the happiness of the many," great-souled men take their birth ; their lives and works are past the ordinary human run, and the method of their preaching is equally marvellous.

And what are we doing ? The son of a poor Brahmana, who has sanctified us by his birth, raised us by his work, and has turned the sympathy of the conquering race towards us by his immortal sayings—what are we doing for him ? Truth—is not always palatable, still there are times when it has to be told—some of us do understand that his life and teachings are to our gain, but there the matter ends. It is beyond our power even to make an attempt to put those precepts into practice in our own lives —far less to consign our whole body and soul to the huge waves of harmony of Jnana and Bhakti that Sri Ramakrishna has raised. This play of the Lord, those who have understood, or are trying to understand, to them we say,—“what will mere understanding do ? The proof of understanding is in work,—will others believe you, if it ends only in verbal expressions of assurance, or is put forward as a matter of personal faith ? Work argues what it feels ; work out what you feel and let the world see.” All ideas and feelings coming out of the fulness of the heart are known by their fruits—practical works.

Those who knowing themselves very learned think lightly of this unlettered, poor, ordinary temple-priest, to them our humble prayer is : " Of which country, one illiterate temple-priest, by virtue of his own strength, has in so short a time caused the victory of the ancient Sanatana Dharma of your forefathers, to resound even in lands far beyond the seas,—of that country, you are the hero of heroes, the honoured of all, mighty, well-bred, the learned of the learned—how much therefore must you be able to perform far more uncommon, heroic deeds for the welfare of your own land and nation, if you but will it ! Arise, therefore, come forward, display the play of your superior power within, manifest it, and we are standing with offerings of deepest veneration in hand ready to worship you. We are ignorant, poor, unknown and insignificant beggars, with only the beggar's garb as a means of livelihood ; whereas you are supreme in riches and influence, of mighty power, born of noble descent, centres of all knowledge and learning ! Why not rouse yourselves ? Why not take the lead ? Show the way, show us that example of perfect renunciation for the good of the

world and we will follow you like bond-slaves !"

On the other hand, those who are showing unjustified signs of causeless, rancorous hostilities, out of absolute malice and envy—natural to a slavish race—at the success and the celebrity of Sri Ramakrishna and his name—to them we say ; " Dear friends, vain are these efforts of yours ! If this infinite, unbounded, religious wave that has engulfed in its depths the very ends of space—on whose snow-white crest shineth this Divine Form, in the august glow of a heavenly presence,—if this be the effect brought about by our eager endeavours in pursuit of personal name, fame, or wealth, then, without your or any other's efforts, this wave shall, in obedience to the insuperable Law of the Universe, soon die in the infinite watery womb of Time, never to rise again ! But if, again, this tide, in accordance with the will, and under the divine inspiration, of the One Universal Mother, has begun to deluge the world with the flood of the unselfish love of a Great Man's heart, then O feeble man, what power dost thou possess that thou shouldst thwart the onward progress of the Almighty Mother's Will ?"

Courtesy uncontrolled by the laws of good taste becomes laboured effort, caution uncontrolled becomes timidity, boldness uncontrolled becomes recklessness, and frankness uncontrolled becomes effrontery. When the highly-placed pay generous regard to their own families, the people are equally stirred to kindness. When they do not discard old dependants, neither will the people deal meanly with theirs.

*—Confucius.*

## HOLY WISDOM

*By Swami Yatiswarananda*

Once upon a time there was a very clever scholar famous for his great scholarship. One day, his wife had to go out to do some shopping while the lentils were boiling on the hearth. So she asked her husband to look after the lentils until she returned. After a time, the lentils began to boil over. Then the scholar went and prayed to God, "O Lord, stop the lentils boiling over, please. Help me, O Lord." Naturally, this did not help matters very much. When the wife returned and saw what had happened, she asked her husband what he had done. "My dear", he replied, "as soon as the lentils began to boil over, I prayed to the Lord for help." "Prayed?" answered the wife. "You fool. Why didn't you just pour a little cold water into the pot?" This very often happens in our case, too. Never blame others, and never blame the Lord for your own foolishness and lack of insight.

Depend on the Lord, but stand as erect as possible. If He wants there will arise wonderful opportunities for you all, if you are sincere and really dedicate your life to Him alone. He creates different situations, forcing you into them even against your wish. When the Lord makes a plan, and you really become one of His agents, you feel that a certain thing is going to take place and that you are going to be an instrument. But then, we should work consciously, not only live on our instincts as we are doing as long as we are on the animal plane. There is no freedom on the animal plane. There is no freedom while we are content to remain in our half-conscious state.

If you just study your mind, you will find what an amount of subconscious thinking you are doing. You have not yet become fully conscious, wide-awake; you are half asleep, all of you. And this must be changed. Nothing but stereotyped, mechanical animal reactions. They will not lead you anywhere.

In most cases our personality is a chaotic mass of half-conscious or unconscious impulses. First of all, we must rid ourselves of all likes and dislikes brought about by unconscious impulse and prejudice. Only thus can we acquire an individuality that can be joined to the universal. First of all, establish order in yourselves, be wide-awake, become master in your own house, rise above all your ludicrous likes and dislikes, irrational animal impulses, then only the question of spiritual life will arise. There is nothing grand in having strong irrational feelings, bubbling up from the unconscious. Passionateness is not the sign of manhood at all. Hatred and dislike are nothing but weakness and self-excuse.

Most of us are like awful poisonous whirlpools, full of complexes and venom. Break up these complexes, first of all, be one with the current, and your whole life would be full of blessing for yourselves and for others. The task is not an easy one. It requires real heroism and tremendous steadiness.

And the first stage is the most difficult one for all. At the first stage our whole task should be the purification of the mind that will lead to our becoming conscious beings, instead of floating helplessly on the

sea of our half-conscious irrational impulses.

The fun is we live on impulses and say we are free. Where is all this wonderful freedom of the modern man or woman? A passion-ridden, passion-driven slave calling himself free! What fun!

"We have offered our salutations to Thee, the supreme Ruler, who art through eternity free from the illusion of difference by virtue of Thine own essential light, who art nothing but intelligence, and whose sportful activities belong to Maya which is the cause of the origin, subsistence and destruction of the universe." (*Bhagavatam*)

Once the Holy Mother had a vision. She saw Sri Ramakrishna's form become the Ganges and Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) sprinkling its water over the whole world.

The Divine Spark is to be turned into an all-consuming conflagration.

Try to rid yourselves of all the petty forms of likes and dislikes and attachments that fill you and prevent you from being masters in your own house. It is a long and difficult task, but it will have to be achieved if you sincerely want to progress and to attain to your own eternal freedom.

Habit lies in the body, mind and nerves, but habit is never an essential part of our nature. It has acted in a most dirty way. Now change the attitude, change the habit. Rise above all likes and dislikes, bubbling up from the subconscious layers of your minds. The emotions must be completely purified and made healthy. There should be no sickly, romantic sentimentality and there should be no form of aversion.

Wherever there are likes and dislikes, a person has not yet become fully conscious. The conscious person

never hates, never enslaves others, never grieves.

Hatred and lust are the two great obstacles on the way of the spiritual aspirant, and hatred, any form of aversion or dislike, is just as bad and just as impure as lust. So we need not feel proud of our hatred, our dislike, our "righteous" anger, etc., at all. If we cherish such feelings, the sexually immoral person is not in the least worse than we are ourselves. Do not go and try to cheat yourselves on this point.

Hatred prevents all possibility of a progress, just as incontinence does in the case of immoral people. So if we want to cling to our anger, our aversion, our dislikes, spiritual life is not for us. We had better occupy ourselves with something else.

Habit is or formed through practice. Habit can be changed because habit never is an essential part of our being, but only our second nature. Habit has been created through our wrong thinking or through lack of consciousness, through our not being fully awake. Harmful habits can never be formed in the fully conscious man or woman. It may be difficult for us to change our habits, but it has to be done; and it can be done if we are really sincere and do not shrink from sustained self-effort.

"Among the images, etc., etc., one may worship Me just in that in which he may have faith at any particular time. For I am the Self of all and dwell in everything as well as in one's own self." (*Sri Krishna and Uddhava, XXII, 48*)

We have no place for intolerance or blind bigotry; for intolerance always shows that the person has no real faith and no experience. It is the attitude of the atheist clinging desperately to some form because

deep down he cannot conquer his own doubts, consciously or unconsciously. No man of true realisation will ever be intolerant, and only those who themselves have not yet reached the mountain-peak but are still on the way, can be intolerant. While they are on the way, they only see their

own path; but not the other's paths leading to the very same peak which can only be seen and discovered once a person has reached the top. Never listen to the intolerant fool in religion who tries to force the Divine into the straitjacket of his particular liking and blindness.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**INTERPRETATION OF THE BHAGAVADGITA BOOK I. THE BHAGAVADGITA AND MODERN SCHOLARSHIP:** BY S. C. ROY, M.A. (LONDON) I. E. S. PUBLISHED BY LUZAC AND CO., LONDON. PP. 270. PRICE (PAPER COVER) 7S. 6D. CLOTH BINDING 10S. 6D.

Mr. Roy has projected a catena of three volumes on the Gita bearing the titles, *The Bhagavadgita and Modern Scholarship*, *The Bhagavadgita and Its Background* and *Interpretations of the Gita in the Light of Modern Thought*, or as stated on p. 25 "Teachings of the Gita". The first one is before us; the rest are to be published. The published volume purports to present a comprehensive and systematic review of the results of researches on the Gita and the Epic Mahabharata conducted by Eastern and Western Indologists of note for about a century. The author adopts the stand of a historical critic and aims 'at a study of the Gita on a rational-comparative basis, utilizing the results of researches made by modern scholars'. He has his own fears that the method is somewhat 'critical and negative' and 'result destructive'; yet he hopes to demonstrate by his 'dispassionate and disinterested investigation' that 'the teachings of the Gita are not associated with any particular school of philosophy, but present in a nutshell the quintessence of a rational, liberal and universalistic and spiritualistic culture.....the one scripture.....that holds together and synthesizes the finest and noblest elements of Indo-British culture and Euro-Asian civilization...'

Several decades back Richard Garbe, a German orientalist, launched the theory that the original Gita was a product of Bhagavata religion based on Sankhya-Yoga philosophy. Garbe had to leave out from

the existing well-known Gita 143 verses as later interpolations; for he believed that the frame of the Gita is purely Sankhya, and that therefore Vedantic or Vedic references must be foreign to it. Mr. Roy says, 'Garbe's long occupation with the Sankhya philosophy might have generated in his mind a psychological illusion, owing to which he saw every philosophical teaching in other texts or systems as coloured by Sankhya'. The theory of interpolation in the Gita as set forth by Garbe is here proved to be entirely without foundation, with much critical reasoning. In Garbe's view the Gita verses that refer to the impersonal Godhead (or Pantheism) are not compatible with the Personal conception of God (theism) and therefore are to be considered as later additions. Our author points out that this is an error on the part of Garbe who confounded Indian theism with Christian Deism; for in India, as Mr. Roy pointedly puts, the distinction of Pantheism and Theism does not involve necessarily a separation. Again Garbe's assumption that the Gita contains philosophical contradictions is shown to be the result of mere imagination or 'want of higher critical judgment and deeper spiritual insight'. Garbe's attempt to discover defects in all these details of the Gita, says the present book, 'proves his own narrowness and one-sidedness and misdirected and perverted scholarly enthusiasm'. Garbe's book is at present known only to researchers who often deal

in learned trash, and it need not disturb the general Gita student.

Having refuted the views of Garbe in the First Part of the book *in extenso*, Mr. Roy attempts a critical study of the origin and nature of the Mahabharata and the position of the Bhagavadgita, in the Second Part. After a scientific examination of the evidence gathered by the previous scholars and by himself the present writer arrives at the conclusion that the great Epic is 'a heterogeneous mixture of elements which were at first independent of each other but were later on combined more or less into a systematic whole with a definite purpose'. The Gita, it is stated here, is such a sublime and beautiful poem that it attracted 'the notice of the learned interpolators as providing a suitable opportunity for the application of their editorial skill' and they worked it out into the frame-work of the Great Epic. Gita is a pre-epic Upanishadic treatise 'foreign to the Epic Mahabharata in every respect'; it does not fit in with its surroundings 'and is an interrupting digression causing a break in the context. In the way of establishing such a thesis the more formidable opposition comes from Lokamanya Tilak who held that 'the Gita is not an interpolation, as it is inserted in the Epic in the right place on the right occasion and on right grounds'. So the views expressed in the *Gitarahasya* are now examined at length and set aside with the author's own reasons. The writer of our book has pointed out with skill that Tilak's position is untenable and contradictory. On page 90 we read 'Mr. Tilak could not free himself from the old tradition of regarding the Mahabharata as a unitary whole and was blinded by prejudice that there were no additions and interpolations made in the Mahabharata'; but on page 92 we get Mr. Roy's own statement '... and even Tilak himself have noticed various interpolations and later additions in the Great Epic'.

It is pointed out that Madhva was the first to see that there are extensive interpolations and elisions in the Mahabharata; but to the readers of his *Mahabharata-tatparyanirnaya* it is clear that his novel creations and assumptions in it are so alien to the existing Mahabharata that a foundation for them

had to be assumed by the theory of vast omission in the original Mahabharata. So his motive behind the formulation of a theory of interpolation cannot be the same as that of the historical critic.

It is impossible to believe that there was a group of interpolators by profession in ancient India who were fishing for opportunities to exhibit their skill in inserting in literary works whatever they wanted. The ancient teachers who cared not much for popularity or personal gain were not in the habit of leaving their MSS with signatures; oral transmission, absence of copyright laws and lack of motives other than services to others, gave room enough, in the course of centuries, for variant readings, alterations and additions and probably wrong attribution of authorship. This does not mean that we should suspect deliberate lying on their part. It is impossible today to arrive at certainty and truth regarding the precise forms of their writings with mathematical precision. All that researches could do today with existing documents is to test the relative validity of probabilities and assumptions. And it is doubtful whether the game is worth the candle always. This had led Aldous Huxley to remark 'The modern scientific literary researches produce nothing but boring trivialities.' (*Proper Studies* p. 135) Perfect objectivity and scientific precision is much more harder to be achieved in literary researches than in pure science.

We do not find sufficient grounds for assuming that the significance of the teachings of the Gita 'can be truly grasped only when its moral and religious teachings are dissociated altogether from the epic setting'. It passes one's understanding how by its epic connection Gita teachings lose their universal character. Even the traditional students of the Gita plainly accept that the Gita is essentially Upanishadic and its teaching is meant for all time and for the whole humanity though the immediate occasion that evoked Gita was Arjuna's need. This is what is implied by the verse which gives the allegory of the cow and the calf. The object of the poet of the Gita was not to induce Arjuna to engage himself in war—an 'unworthy end' in the view of Mr. Roy—but to teach humanity its duty and to promote spiritual culture.

Nobody would question the latter part of the proposition. Students of the Great Epic and Hindu Ethics based on Varna and Ashrama well know whether Krishna's encouraging Arjuna to fight for the patrimony after long deliberation and negotiation was unworthy or worthy.

The third and the concluding Part of Mr. Roy's book deals with the relation which the Gita bears to the Bhagavata Religion. It does not seem necessary to combat the idea that the Gita has been influenced by the Bhagavata ideal in order to establish its Upanishadic purity. In our view the Bhagavata religion is not a foreign importation and so entirely alien to the Vedic culture. It is only a slight modification of the Vedic stream of thought. There is not the least trace of Indian tradition, historically reliable, to the contrary. In the earliest Vedic hymns the ideal of Bhakti is already present. But the element of Priti or loving remembrance is yet very rudimentary. The monism of the later hymns of the Rgveda received two kinds of emphasis subsequently; in the Upanishads it remained a purely philosophical monism having on its practical side pure contemplation as a method of realization. The second kind of emphasis was received in the Bhagavata religion where it took the shape of a theological monism with the element of love to the object of worship emphasized specially. In the later metrical Upanishads this type of loving contemplation is styled as Bhakti. The Gita which harmonizes both the sides always emphasizes the element of Love. *Bhajante Bhavasamanvitah : bhajatam prtipurvakam*, etc. This is an original contribution of Gita foreign to earlier Upanishads; but may be traced in seed form to the Samhitas through the Bhagavata religion. We do not see much force in the argument that the Gita has nothing to do with the Bhagavata religion which is known to have existed before Gita.

The personality of Sri Krishna is an enigma for all except the pious Hindu nurtured in the true tradition. 'Scientific criticism' of which the present writer is an advocate, posits several Krishnas to solve the riddle. Mr. Roy thinks that the author of the Gita was a Rishi, a great poetic genius, well-versed in Vedic culture. In his opinion the Krishna of the Maha-

bharata as interpreted by the Kauravas was a 'cunning and designing' 'adventurer and an ambitious diplomat'. It is impossible for us to believe that generations of Hindus were so stupid that they were contented to worship such a Krishna until they are aroused from their foolishness by 'scientific arguments' invented by Indo-British culture. 'The Krishna of the Bhagavata is disclosed to us without any bias or prejudice' to be 'the leader of the youth movement among the pastoral tribes of Brindavan' who with his friends engaged himself in 'rural welfare work like cleaning and purifying the tank that supplied water for drinking, and killing snakes and cranes and other pests'. Thanks to historical criticism, that we are today in possession of such new Knowledge!!! The poet philosopher of the Gita too was evidently a reformer, a reformer of the religious and social life of contemporary Vedic and non-Vedic Aryans; and hence it is contented that 'his attitude towards the Vedic rites and ceremonies of sacrificial religion and worship of many Gods was one of protest and revolt' and that 'his attitude towards ascetic practices away from the worldly life of family and social ties was equally characterized by a spirit of disapproval and disavowal.' The author of the Gita only says that the worship of various Gods with the view of ephemeral gain is a trivial thing when compared with the disinterested worship or contemplation of the Supreme. It is not the Vedic rite or ceremonies themselves that is decried or discouraged, but the spirit in which they are conducted. Passages like *yajante satvika devan, yajnadanatapah karma na tyajyam*, make it amply clear. If he were against Vedic sacrifice, he would not have emphasized the various types and details of *yajna* including vedic sacrifices. What is condemned is *namayajna*, and not *yajna*. Nor the existence of various *devas* denied anywhere in the Gita.

It is again a fashion today to say that the Gita advocates enjoyment cum renunciation. If this contention is accepted we do not know what would be the fate of the following phrases in the Gita : *vivikta-sevi, udasina, ekaki, aniketa, aparigraha, nirasti, sama-loshitasmakanchana, niepriyah sarva kamebhyah, asakta-buddhih sarvatra*, verses XIII. 10, 11, etc. That the Gita

does not advocate self-torture or immobility is evident to all; but that does not mean we have an easy comfortable religion in it, a mixture of renunciation and enjoyment of worldly pleasures. The difference between idolatrous and non-idolatrous Bhakti which the present author so sharply contrasts also cannot be more than one of degree. For Bhakti always posits an Object of love; and the Infinite God conceived as an object is always an 'idol' of the mind or matter. If Mr. Roy has seen 'accumulated dirt and impurity of idolatrous worship' in the Bhakti of Epics and Puranas, they are also a rich mine of sublimest devotion and philosophy for those who search for it in them.

These and other differences notwithstanding Mr. Roy's daring book affords useful reading to historical students interested in the study of the Great Epic and the Gita.

**HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF LINGAYAT RELIGION: BEING AN INTRODUCTION TO LINGADHARANACHANDRIKA OF NANDIKESWARA WITH TRANSLATION AND NOTES**

BY M. R. SAKHARE, M.A.; T.D. (CANTAB.)  
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR AT HIS RESIDENCE, 134, THALAKWADI P. O. P.  
xxiv+682+76+250+20 PRICE: Rs. 15.

The present work will stand as a very valuable document for the future, guiding and helping all who make an elaborate study of the Lingayat faith either for its spiritual content or for the historical interest it holds. The non-technical treatment and informal language of the book makes it equally valuable for the laymen as well as the scholar. The elaborate Introduction of over 600 pages contains a mine of information on the earlier phase of Dravidian religion and its affiliations to the Aryan faith. The notes and explanations given at the closing part of the book throw light on the doctrines and practices of the special form of Saivism forming the theme of the book. We recommend the book to all libraries and persons interested in religion. Lack of a proper index and a number of misprints are the defects of this publication which are to be removed in the next edition.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CYCLONE RELIEF WORK

THE SECRETARY, RAMAKRISHNA MISSION WRITES ON 18TH DECEMBER, 1942:—

The Ramakrishna Mission is carrying on relief work against enormous difficulties of communication and transport in 224 villages of the Midnapur, 24-Parganas and Balasore Districts through 10 centres: in the first, in the Khejuri, Nandigram and Mayna Thanas; in the second, in the Saugor Thana, and in the third in Bhograi Thana. In the week ending on the 12th December we distributed 1636 mds. 1 sr. of rice, 1005 mds. 32 srs. of paddy, 167 mds. 12 srs. of dal, 10 mds. of salt, 91 pieces of new cloth, 263 chaddars, 685 pieces of used cloth, 51 blankets and 158 mats among 51,807 recipients.

From the 4th November to the 12th December, altogether 4,983 mds. 33½ srs. of rice, 3,361 mds. 1 sr. of paddy, 317 mds. 8 srs. of dal, 42 mds. 22 srs. of salt, 4,395 pieces of new cloth, 685 pieces of used cloth, 4,141 blankets and 1,328 mats have

been distributed in the three Districts.

Our total receipts up to the 15th Dec. are Rs. 1,80,120 and our total expenditure about Rs. 79,000. We have also received articles worth approximately Rs. 67,000. Our weekly expenditure is roughly Rs. 25,000.

We convey our grateful thanks to the generous donors. Further contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by: The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

### THE DEMISE OF A SAVANT

The demise of Sri S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, M.A., B.Sc., BAR-AT-LAW on the 9th of December, has removed from the modern interpreters of Indian philosophy a very able and promising savant. The event is as sad as it is sudden. Mr. Sastri had a brilliant academic career and filled his place as the head of the philosophy department of the Madras University most creditably. His earlier studies on Saivism, Sankhyakarika, Paramarthasara and the careful and critical edition of

the Siddhantalessa besides several short studies on philosophical topics have made his name deservedly famous in India. He had a wonderful gift of translating and interpreting ancient texts with scientific precision and an eminent degree of readability. Though he was not born in advaitic tradition, and Advaita was an anathema in his earlier days, as he points out in his Miller Lectures, for 1937, after careful study for two decades he had an intellectual conviction of Advaita which he finally accepted and devotedly served. Mr. Sastri has contributed a thoughtful paper on Sri Ramakrishna to the *Vedanta Kesari* of last April. The translation of the famous Vivarana-prameya and Vedantaparibhasha recently received from his pen, exhibit his talents in the field admirably and students on Advaita will be ever grateful for these gifts. We share the grief of his family and friends and pray for his Peace in God.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SISUMANGAL PRATIŠTHAN, CALCUTTA. REPORT FOR 1941

The Sisumangal Pratishthan is a premier Maternity and Child Welfare centre run by the Mission. The activities of the institution may be classified as follows:—

- (1) Antenatal care.
- (2) Hospital confinement.
- (3) Home confinement.
- (4) Treatment of Gynaecological cases.
- (5) Post-natal cure and follow-up of children.
- (6) Training of midwives.

The hospital is well-equipped, having 54 maternity beds, baby wards, labour rooms, an operation theatre, besides an out-patients' clinic. There were 927 general ward (free) patients, 843 paying ward patients and 183 Cabin patients during the year under review. Number of mothers' beds was 7 in 1934 and 60 in 1941. The number of deliveries conducted was

192 in 1934 and 1953 in 1941. The daily average of mothers and babies treated rose from 7·5 in 1934 to 90·2 in 1941. These figures speak for themselves.

Special facilities are provided for the training of girls and young women of respectable families in mid-wifery. During the year under review four candidates appeared for the examination in mid-wifery and all of them passed and registered themselves under the Bengal Nursing Council.

The total income for the year came to Rs. 57,581—13—0 and expenditure was Rs. 51,520—3—3.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAPITH, DEOGHAR, REPORT FOR 1941.

This is a residential High English school that aims at giving an all-round education to youths.

There were 148 boys on the roll at the end of the year. The school has a well-qualified staff of 18 teachers. Emphasis is given on the physical culture of boys. The boys manage their own affairs through a Boys' Court. During the year the Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Saraswati Puja and Birthdays of prophets were celebrated. There is a Library and Reading Room attached to the school.

The Publication Department brought out a new book containing *Vakyavritti* and *Almajnanopadeshabiddi* of Acharya Sankara with English translation.

The Outdoor Dispensary treated 6,393 patients during the year.

A shrine with a prayer Hall, a dormitory to accommodate 30 students, a cowshed and roofing of the present gymnasium shed seem to be the wants of the institution. The total receipts for the year came to Rs. 60,837—3—9 and the expenses were Rs. 43,050—10—6.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

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## WE WILL REMAKE

### I

The Hindu conception of world-history as an eternal stream impelled from time to time by the oft-recurring wave of divine intervention through Avatars, has a metaphysical import of practical significance. The Hindu never considered the world so good as not to need the hand of the Divine to keep the 'balance' intact. Hence his worship of the Avatars. The widely-accepted Dasavatars (the ten incarnations) are worshipped by the Hindu as the 'basic potential' of an eleventh that must come to bring this already unmanageably chaotic world-show to a close before beginning afresh. The man of science may laugh at the Hindu believing in the Avatars as a necessity for the maintenance of the cosmic moral equilibrium and may stamp him as 'unscientific' in his approach to Reality. But a closer scrutiny will reveal that it is the man of science who unconsciously lays himself open to his own charge. The eternal immutable Reality can make

itself felt only by adapting itself to the transitory, terrestrial flux through renewed incarnations. It must acknowledge and answer the laws of nature before it can reveal to the nature-bound man. And until Reality *remakes* itself in a way comprehensible to man, it is a sealed book to him; hence no Reality at all. This places the Hindu approach to Avatars on a scientific basis.

We may, in passing, refer to a theory that is current to-day which interprets the ten Avatars of Vishnu as the well-marked ascending steps in the evolution of species. According to the scientific conception of evolution life first appeared in the form of fish on our planet. And consistently enough the first Avatar was Matsyavatara—the incarnation in the form of the fish. Then came the Kurmavatara (the tortoise-incarnation) and Varaha (the boar) and lastly that of man. The incarnations of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna appeared in human forms and as they enshrined the moral and the

spiritual in them, they gave ample evidence of their being the flower and fulfilment of the evolutionary process. The spiritual stress marks the culmination of evolution. They were men and supermen besides. One fact worthy of note emerges from the foregoing : The incarnating principle did not take a form outside the pale of the then evolved species. When the reptile was all the mode of evolution, it manifested as one such, and when man emerged, it accepted the human tabernacle. But all the same the Avatars exhibited extraordinary energy and prowess and performed feats which all their species put together could not have achieved. This gives us the clue to the understanding of the technique the Divine employs to create itself, to remake itself for human comprehension. It incorporates the extraordinary in the ordinary, the infinite in the finite ; it incarnates the Divine in the human. How can Reality continue to be unchanging and unaccommodating and yet live in the changing heart of its votary, the phenomenal flux ? Even as God stands in immediate need of man's good-will if He is to reveal himself, so Reality stands in urgent need of the phenomenal to keep up its pristine integrity. 'Just as the Eternally-Real' writes Hermann Keysriling, 'manifests itself only by renewed incarnations in the transitory, so the Eternally-True maintains its identity within the flux of time only by means of a continuous change of appearance in harmony with the spirit of the times.' Thus, of its own necessity Reality, time and again, gave itself to manifestation on the terrestrial plane and the Avatars came as the fulfilment of the necessity. Consistently the Hindu seers conceived of a Reality that is dynamic, worshipped a divinity that accommodates to the

needs of a votary. When man fails to make his God evolve with his evolving life, that God must make room for another. The Puranas depict epic upheavals of progress and prosperity on earth following the advent of an Avatar. It is natural that a new swelling wave from the bottom of the stream must make it heave and even overflow. Contrarywise, the stream falls to its lowest ebb when its source dries up and ceases to feed. Eternal Truth in antiquated term cannot illumine the hearts of men and women in the throes of a swift-moving evolutionary stream. The lack of religious feeling, the disbelief in moral law, the universal scepticism of these days can only be ascribed to the incapacity of Reality to remake itself according to man's needs, or rather to man's failure to recover and remould Reality to suit his demands. Truth needs to be *recovered* ; not until then will it be vital truth, not until then will it help man to heighten the value of life and fulfil it.

## II

The one fact that emerges from the foregoing is the essential dynamism of Reality. Such dynamism is vividly pictured in Aryan scriptures. 'He' (the supreme Reality), says the Upanishad, 'desired, May I become many. Having brooded, He projected all this. Having brought it forth, He entered into it ; He became both the being and the Beyond. He became the defined and the undefined, the founded and the foundationless, the conscious and the unconscious, the real and the unreal ; whatever else there is—yea—He became the entire Reality.' The picture we get here of the self-dichotomization of Reality is very significant ; Reality incarnates by throwing itself in mutually opposing evolutes, which can be classified as

terrestrial and non-terrestrial, or the material and the spiritual respectively. The apparently meaningless menace of life's antinomies, the ethical enigmas and the eternal war between our finitude and infinitude, all these acquire meaning in the light of the above. The earthly manifestation of Reality is a paradox, from which fundamental paradox life springs. No doubt, when life reverts to its source, when the path of Nivritti begins, then the paradox dissolves by itself and Life becomes once more congealed in Reality. 'If all postulates of the spirit,' says Hemann Keyserling, 'point to a region beyond the terrestrial, if the ethical problem is ultimately incomprehensible; if ideals and reality are for ever disparate—the ultimate meaning of all these facts is this: *These very insolubilities create the tension spirit requires for its manifestation on earth.*' Such a conception of Reality as holding the balance between the eternal inconsistencies has the merit of eliciting a special appeal to life, as life is a flow to its goal pressing the opposites of the terrestrial and the non-terrestrial into service. Only when life is made to comprehend these opposites and merge in Reality, can life blossom in all its fulness.

Hence the nature of the tension in which Reality creates itself is essentially benign to life. We may go a step further and say that the tension between the finite and the infinite, between the material and the spiritual holds the promise of self-realisation as it points to the self-realising content in the evolute. The Divine, says the Upanishad, having created this macrocosm entered into it. So the seed of self-realisation is ever-present waiting to be watered and nurtured. Or, to continue the metaphor of the tension, if he will, the tension can be

eased and the whole weight of life can be thrown on the side of the infinite, on the side of the spiritual and thus self-realisation be achieved. It is possible to transfer the tension to one side and sublimate it. The transformation of sinners into saints; a common feature of the religious history of nations is the blazing fulfilment of this possibility. It is possible to spiritualise matter. It is possible to overcome nature, to transform it by the aid of the spiritual. That has been the way of all spiritual giants. It is certainly true that the spirit has all the semblance of impotence from the earthly standpoint. In the worldly sense, all spiritual men to this day had been impotent. For they ignored the things of the world and placed spirit before anything else. 'Seek ye first,' said the Nazarene, 'the kingdom of God and all else will be added unto you.' Still in the long run Christ's spirit vanquished the Roman Empire. Even as an idea, when kept before the mind's eye long enough, transforms itself in some mysterious way or other into reality, so spirit when consistently contemplated in the long run becomes the possessor and ruler of body and soul. Then its own force of radiation gains terrestrial effect. The earth becomes the mere material of spirit, the shrine of divinity a glow with Light. The Kingdom of God comes to be established on earth, true indeed to Christ's teaching.

### III

All this clarifies the paradoxes contained in the teachings of spiritual men to the effect that the soft is ultimately more potent than the hard, or that the poor are superior to the rich. The soft and the subtle, can with ease absorb all that is spiritual and radiate it, whereas the hard is an impenetrable medium for the spirit. The soft always

yields ; the hard only breaks. The supersensuous realm has its roots in the subtle. Hence we find men of spirit teaching the superiority of gentleness and piety, tolerance and humility. They believed that gentle virtues always opened the door to the Divine. We read the Godhead in the Gita characterising the divine nature as the home of harmlessness, non-attachment, renunciation, serenity, compassion to creatures, modesty and gentleness and emphasising these as making for liberation, the liberation of the spirit from the clutches of matter. One is apt to doubt the efficiency of these seemingly negative virtues for bringing the spiritual transformation. To such we answer in the forceful words of Aldous Huxley : ' Non-attachment ' he says, ' is negative only in name. The practice of non-attachment entails the practice of all virtues. It entails the practice of charity for example ; for there are no fatal impediments than anger and cold-blooded malice to the identification of the self with the immanent and transcendent more-than-self. It entails the practice of courage—for fear is a painful and obsessive identification of the self with its body. It entails the cultivation of intelligence ; for insensitive stupidity is the main-root of all other vices. It entails the practice of generosity and disinterestedness ; for avarice and the love of possession constrain the victim to equate themselves with mere things.' If the Hindu scriptures with untired vigour insist on the path of virtue as the most efficient means to get at Reality, it is because of their correct insight into the nature of the spiritual Reality and into the inability of means such as man's intellect or learning. In this age of intellectual intoxication and the consequent dis-

regard of virtues, we would with profit turn to the wisdom of the Upanishad which declares : ' Neither by the power of the intellect, nor by study of scriptures, can the goal be reached. It is not for those who have not turned away from wickedness, not for the unmeditative nor for the unpacified.'

#### IV

From what we have said at the start, of the incarnations that came as vindications of the vitality of Reality and from what we have said of Reality creating itself to maintain its integrity in the terrestrial flux, one thing stands out : Man while being a child of Reality, remakes It, makes It dynamic and wants It to evolve as he evolves. Man gives to his father what the father has given him, the power to make and remake. How true has this been in the life of the Hindu : With a handful of water taken from the Mother Ganges the Hindu worships Her. He makes his God and prays to Him to maintain himself and his God, which he knows safest in God's keeping. All is caught up in the one engulfing creative stream ; a wave from it passes through man and joins the one coming from Reality. There is in Reality a passion to remake things, a passion to remould things to the pink of perfection and the will to achieve it. The flair for creative activity and art in man is only a spark of this passion and the more we brighten this spark the nearer we are to our Source. If all religions with one voice condemn sloth as the most heinous of sins against God, it is because sloth resists the entry into man of this creative urge that emanates from Reality and engulfs the whole of creation. It has been said by our wise ancients that to know Reality is to be Reality Itself. So then, to inherit from Reality its

creativity and the technique thereof must be intensely practical. We can with ease transfer from Reality more and more of the passion to remake, for we are its children. But we cannot hope to do so before we give the go-by to our passions within us. Our passion is passivity while the passion in Reality is for activity. Through control only we can get over our passions and so control is power. Knowledge brings control and control brings freedom. Freedom is not a gift ; it is a victory and has to be won so long as 'things' block our free approach to the sanctum of the spirit. As avenues leading to the spirit, knowledge, control, freedom, power, virtues, these are all one thing. Before 'the empire of man over nature' must come the empire of man over himself or else he will be like the modern man who has inherited a good earth and has himself made it so bad as he cannot inhabit it. It is in the character of man to worship power. And for long he has worshipped it and has got enough of it now, but it is unfortunately power without purpose. If man feels the power without him more intensely than the power within, he worships nature with a humble fear and leans on magic and supernatural rewards. If he feels the power within him more intensely than in the power without, he sees divinity in himself and allies himself fully with it, as the sheet anchor of his being. In the divinity within he sees the one and only centre of remoulding activity

and thinks not of worshipping and obeying nature, but of controlling and commanding her. Here begins the spiritual *remaking* of man, the supreme need of the times. By the self-born remaking power, the man of realisation transforms his environment, lights a candle in every niche of his life and radiates light all round. Only such men can remake and when this dance of destruction is over they will have to play their part efficiently and well. The creations of the men of science, however glamorous are perishable ; we see they themselves getting crushed under the iron heels of their deity, Force.

We, Indians have all through been worshippers at the temple of the spirit and hence have been invulnerable. Nevertheless, we are a little discouraged to-day. Perhaps, we sometimes feel—all this effort is a vain circling in the mist ; perhaps we do not advance, but only move. Our faith in progress is dimmed. We are choked with the heavy sense of a vast futility encompassing the world. We even tire of the 'social problem' ; we have tried so many ways, knocked at so many doors and found so little of that which we sought. The reason is within ourselves. We, lovers of the spiritual have become doubtful of the object of our love. Or, are we tired of the object of our love ? God forbid ! For our love and faith in the spiritual alone can sustain and inspire us when we will soon be called upon to *Remake*.

## THE GITA THEORY OF ACTION. A STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF HORMIC PSYCHOLOGY.

By Prof. P. S. Naidu, M.A., & R. Mahadevan, B.A. (Hons).

### I

'Are we, since our bodies are "matter", to seek in physical laws an explanation for the whole of life; or are we, since our bodies are alive, to interpret their activity by what we know of life, where its character appears in the highest and clearest form—namely in the conscious life of the mind' asks Professor T. P. Nunn in his famous work, '*Education, Its Data and First Principles*'. Behaviourists, under Professor Watson's guidance, have established a theory which is ingenious and amusing. A detailed criticism of behaviourism, may be out of place here. We can but admire the clever attempts at converting men into robots. Leaving Watson's theory of 'muscle-twitchism' aside, let us see what Professor McDougall, the propounder of Hormic psychology has to say about human action.

Professor McDougall asserts that every human action is an instance of purposive behaviour. Behaviour means, action or actions of some living organism. There are seven marks of behaviour; (1) Certain spontaneity of movement, (2) persistence of activity independently of the continuance of the 'impression which may have initiated it, (3) variation of direction of persistent movements, (4) cessation of the activity as soon as the goal is reached, (5) preparation for the new situation towards the production of which the action contributes; and (6) showing a certain degree of improvement in the effectiveness of behaviour when it is repeated by the organism under

similar circumstances are the six fundamental marks of behaviour. Lastly purposive action is a total reaction of the organism.

*Behaviour is Purposive.* By 'purposive' we mean that all activity is a striving toward a goal however vaguely the goal may be thought of. The term 'teleological' may also mean 'purposive'. But we have to modify the ordinary meaning of the term teleological. Generally we mean by 'teleological', that the processes of organisms are adjusted to bring about certain results, which are the goal designed or willed by the creator. This would make human activity mechanical. So what Professor McDougall means by 'teleological' is that 'in the process of organic evolution the goal of the process is progressively created and defined, as evolution advances and as mind becomes increasingly capable of conceiving the future in terms of alternatives between which it chooses.' 'The theory that all organic behaviour is purposive in however vague and lowly a degree, and that purposive action is fundamentally different from mechanical process, may be conveniently called the Hormic theory.' The word Hormic is from the Greek *horme* meaning, 'a vital impulse' or 'urge to action'. This may be considered to be synonymous with Bergson's *elan vital*, 'Jung's 'libido' and Schopenhauer's "will-to-life". In every activity there is this hormic urge. While I am writing this essay my neuro-muscular mechanism is making me sit up; my fingers grip the pen, my eyes see and so on. The

other internal processes are also going on. I am also feeling the vexation of any work, which feeling is common to lethargic people; yet, I try to understand what Professor McDougall has written, and to interpret his views. I do this because of the urge or, in psychological terms, of the conative process working in me. I may not be conscious of the goal at the given moment, because of the strain of writing. This is true of all organic behaviour. Professor T. P. Nunn says, 'To this element of drive or urge, whether it occurs in the conscious life of men and the higher animal or in the unconscious activities of their bodies and the (presumably) unconscious behaviour of lower animals, we propose to give a single name—horme'.<sup>1</sup> We begin our lives as a cell in our mother's body, as a very part of her blood, feed on her flesh and live as parasites and yet, all the same, each one of us has life and destinies of our own. Even while we are still in our mother's womb, this hormic process is at work, vaguely. From birth onwards picking our way through the labyrinth of the external world, we acquire well-defined conational elements with newer significance. This 'conation', to quote Nunn, once again 'rises slowly from the level of blind or purblind, impulse to that of clear-eyed desire eventually from the level of desire seeking an immediate good to that of will fixed upon a distant and perhaps ideal goal'.<sup>2</sup>

Till now we were saying that every action is an outcome of some 'urge' or motive. Now, this motive, when truly assigned will be found to be some instinctive impulse or some conjunction of two or more such

impulses. Professor McDougall recognises thirteen instincts; the instinct of escape, (self-preservation) of combat, and of repulsion; the parental instinct, the instinct of appeal, the pairing instinct, instinct of curiosity, of assertion, the gregarious, food-seeking, and constructive instincts, and in deference to the English superstition regarding number thirteen, Laughter is taken as the fourteenth instinct. We can trace every action to some motive, and that motive to one or more of the instinctive impulses.

'We may say, that directly or indirectly, the instincts are the primo movers of all human activity, by the conative or impulsivo force of some instinct, or of some habit derived from an instinct, every train of thought, however cold and passionless it may seem, is borne along towards its end, and every bodily activity is initiated and sustained. The instinctive impulses determining the ends of all activities and supply the driving power by which all mental activities are sustained; and all the complex intellectual apparatus of the most highly developed mind is but the instrument by which these impulses seek their satisfaction, while pleasure and pain do but serve to guide them in their choice of the means. Take away these instinctive dispositions, with their powerful impulses, and the organism would become incapable of activity of any kind; it would be inert and motionless, like a wonderful clock-work, whose mainspring had been removed or a steam-engine whose fires had been drawn. These impulses are the mental forces that maintain and shape all the life of individuals and societies and in them we are confronted with the central mystery of life and mind and will.'<sup>3</sup>

This quotation states clearly the main thesis of Professor McDougall's hormic theory. This, in brief, is the hormic theory of action. Every action, in all living organisms, can be traced to some one of the instinctive

1 & 2 quoted in McDougall's *Outlines* P. 74.

3. McDougall's *Social Psychology* P. 44.

impulses. Conation is at the root. In animals, these impulses are aroused by some sense stimuli. If danger or some other factor impedes the progress of this impulse, the animal desists from that action. We do not know, whether they come back to work out the impulse after the impediment is removed. How is it with man?

Let us take the first mythical man, Mowgli, made familiar to us by Rudyard Kipling. This Mowgli would certainly be no better than the higher mammals, as regards his initial equipments. Yet we can find one difference. He will not rely on present perceptions only for his guidance, but unlike animals, he would make use of previous perceptions. Here, action, directed toward a remote object may be called a desire. *Desire may be defined as an impulse toward a remote object.* Animals, do not desist from their impulsive actions till their object is secured. But man can and does refrain from action and can renew it after a forced or voluntary suspension. Here conation was sustained by desire.

'Such suspension of action, while the impulse to action continues to work in the form of desire kept alive by imagination of its object, is the essential condition of all higher intellectual activity, of all thinking in the fuller and more usual sense of the word'.<sup>4</sup>

*Desires are the conative tendencies of our instincts working on the plane of imagination.* The organised system of these tendencies, directed upon many things towards realising many goals, connected with those objects, is character. 'Character is the system of directed conative tendencies'. The nature of this system depends upon the intellect of a man, or his cognitive

organisation which again is brought forth only to carry out his desires. So the character of a man depends upon the nature of his desires.

The *sentiments* are the units of character. A sentiment involves, some individual tendency to attach certain emotions and desires to some object. After some experience with some object, we get this conative attitude which is enduring. Even higher animals acquire some such simple attitudes. In the course of his life a man acquires various sentiments, such as love towards some, hatred towards others and so on. The nature of these sentiments and the object toward which the sentiments are developed, depend upon the emotional attitude of the man.

*Emotions* are certain excitements in us, which we experience, on perceiving certain things or when imagining some situations. These are subjective feelings. The same object may evoke different emotions in different persons in different times. This is followed by certain bodily changes and the nature of the emotion is of the conative tendency at work. A huge mountain, evokes the emotion of fear in the primitive man, and the derived emotion of awe in the poet who bursts out singing of the grandeur of nature. When the express, carries through magnificent scenery, I may not notice anything if I had been thinking of some other thing. But at other times, when I see a solitary rose just blooming, it may throw me into ecstasies. So the emotions of a man also depend upon the desire at work. If you desire a thing, that thing excites you and throws you into various mental and physical attitudes. Again every emotion has an instinctive basis, (*e. g.*, fear instinctive of escape;

4. McDougall: *Outlines of Psychology* pp. 207-208.

love, parental instinct and so on). The instinctive impulse of escape is evoked at the sight of a dangerous thing; the emotion of fear is aroused in you and you run away. The same object may rouse the instinct of combat in another, he gets angry and fights. So the emotions are of the nature of the underlying conative tendency which determine the desires of a man. Now we see how a well regulated order of sentiments is required to make up good character.

There are many sentiments to be acquired by one, and these are the units of organisation of the affective side of personality. Along with this, certain tastes for activities of various kinds, should be acquired. These alone are not enough to achieve character. A further step in organisation, organisation of a higher level, which integrates the sentiments and tastes into one system should be had for achieving character. Only such an organisation of sentiments and tastes can make it possible for one to exercise his will power in the proper sense of the term.

'The structure of every developed mind comprises a multitude of beliefs'. Some have beliefs which tend to support one kind of knowledge. In some others different beliefs might have been developed in a uniform manner. One builds up a system of religious beliefs and another system of scientific beliefs, each independent of the other. This is possible because of the conative tendencies at work in him. It is only he who has a harmonised system consisting of many beliefs, can be said to have a 'disinterested love of truth'.

Beliefs are enduring features of the mental structure and the development of the mind through experience largely consists in the acquiring of

beliefs and in the more or less logical organisation of these beliefs in systems and systems of systems. We have certain beliefs and doubts. A thief is sometimes convinced in his belief that his thieving is a moral profession. Beliefs are established by a process of reasoning.

Thus we have seen according to Hormic theory of action, both mental and physical, desire is the only factor which is like the 'starting handle' of behaviour. Without any desire, humanity would have come to a standstill, long ago. A study of abnormal psychology, tells us how, seemingly meaningless organic convulsions and muscle-twitchings are the result of frustrated desires. Tics, as such movements are called, can be traced to latent desires. A boy would now and then periodically thrust his hand as if stabbing the air. A psycho-analytic study revealed, that he desired to stab his master who ill-treated him much. This tic disappeared when the boy's circumstances changed and when he became independent. Even sleep cannot be had without the desire to sleep. No amount of physical and mental exhaustion alone would do to make one sleep. Even after the last ounce of energy is spent, we see one work with vigour on a new problem. This he can do by drawing upon his reserve store of energy, if the new problem is to satisfy any one of his desires. So also, one can go to sleep at any time if he desires to do so. McDougall has, by analysing his own dreams and those of others proved that dreams also have a conative basis.

So far, a general survey of hormic theory of action has been given showing how *desire* is the basis of all action, conscious, unconscious, physical or mental. Illustrative

examples to substantiate the facts, have not been given since we have again to go through all this, when comparing this theory with the Gita theory of action.

To a superficial critic the hormic theory and the teaching of the Gita, may seem to be diametrically opposed. If he prides himself on being a Sanatanist, he would say that this theory is sacrilegious. Lord Krishna says that we should be desireless, and how can we be so, if every action has a desire as its root. But, here it is hoped to prove that the Gita idea of action is in no way antagonistic to the Hormic theory.

Since the question rests upon whether it is possible to do desireless action, as alleged to have been urged by Gita, it would be better to understand clearly what do we mean by 'desire'. 'Desire is conative impulse working on the plane of imagination'. 'When a tendency is stirred to action by the mere thought of an object that is distant, we feel the stirring within us as an impulse to action; it becomes what we call a desire and we formulate in thought the goal of our desire'.<sup>5</sup> Instinctive impulses are roused by stimuli, but they are sustained and carried out till the goal is reached because of desire. The working of this desire rests upon the nature of the man and his character. The confusion arising out of misunderstanding Gita's desireless action is not a genuine confusion. The difficulty arises when we confuse desire for action with desire for the fruit of action. Here again there is a mistake in teaching about desire for action. Action is but a means to an end and there is no desire for any action. We have only a goal in mind and there is desire to reach that.

5. McDougall: *Character and the Conduct of Life*. p. 14.

That urge to attain something is desire. So far, the destination of desire is common to both the theories. Let us now see whether they disagree when they talk about the control of this desire.

### *The Gita Theory of Action*

The two armies of the cousins, the Pandavas and Kurus, are drawn up in full battle array. Arjuna requests his charioteer, Lord Krishna, to drive to a place of vantage from where he can see the two armies. On the enemy's side, Arjuna sees his kith and kin, his master, former playmates and a host of relatives. This war is the outcome of a family feud of long standing. This is fought to right a wrong done by an offending party, rather than to gain any material prosperity, though that may be a natural sequence, if the Pandavas win. Arjuna is a reputed warrior and upon him rests a great responsibility. But on seeing that he has to fight his own friends and relatives, he draws back. He cries out that he would rather be shot unawares than fight his own kin to gain his kingdom. Now the Divine charioteer interposes and exhorts him not to lose courage. Then follows the brilliant discourse on Karma yoga. 'Arjuna typifies the struggling individual who feels the burden and the mystery of world'. Arjuna, a typical example of a man in ordinary life, faced with a temptation, cries out in agony. His Divine teacher tells him that he is a weak man to feel for that which is inevitable.

#### *Lord Krishna tells him*

'Thou hast been mourning for them who should not be mourned for. Yet thou speakest words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor the dead.' (II, 11).

The Lord further urges him to rise above petty desires, pain and pleasures and do his duty regardless of the results. Arjuna rightly questions Him again and again ; the first two verses of Chapter III

जयायसि चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता वुद्दिर्जनार्दन ।  
तत्किं कर्मणि धोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥  
व्यामिश्रेणैव वाक्येन वुद्दिं मोहयसीव मे ।  
तदेकं वद निरिचत्य येन अयोऽहमानुयाम् ॥

are characteristic. When replying to this the Lord in verse 5, says,

नहि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत ।  
कर्थते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणः ॥

*Verily, none can ever rest for even an instant, without performing action; for all are made to act, helplessly indeed, by the Gunas, born of Prakriti.*

Before coming to the nature of the Karma Yoga as taught by the Gita, it would be better to consider the nature of Prakriti and its influence on ordinary individuals. This would give us an idea of the normal human life, and we can consider later the spiritual life which should be substituted for the normal life.

'The modern dynamic view of the constitution of matter—a view that has tended to dematerialise Matter, a view that sees in the atoms of Matter a vast magazine of power, a view that is faced with a residual element of the inexplicable in all its mechanistic explanation, a view that sees in radio-activity the drafting of a new and practically inexhaustible energy into the hitherto-supposed closed and constant realm of physical energies, already shows that physical science has taken vast strides towards the Sakta position, which (a) makes power to be the essence of everything (b) makes power in reality immeasurable in everything and in the universe for the matter of that; and (c) makes the 'dynamic point' the perfect magazine of power.'

6. Sir John Woodroffe: quoted in *Kalyana Kalputaru*.

7. Gita Ch. XIII, 19, 20 & 21.

This Sakta point of view is well developed in the Gita, though not explicitly, but in its significant treatment of Prakriti, Maya and *gunas*.

What is Prakriti ?

Bhumi (earth), Ap (water), Anala (fire), vayu (air), Kha (ether) mind, intellect and egoism. This is my Prakriti, divided eight-fold. This is the lower Prakriti. (VIII, 45).

Then in subsequent verses the nature of the higher Prakriti is described.

In verse 7 He tells us 'I am, bull among the Bharatas, desire in beings, unopposed to Dharma.'

धर्मोविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥

In XIII 5 and 6, when describing the Kshetra, he says that it possesses great elements, egoism, intellect, Mula Prakriti, the senses, desire, hatred, etc. Here again we have,

'Know thou Prakriti and Purusha are both beginningless; and know thou also that all modifications and *gunas* are born of Prakriti. In the productions of the body and the senses, Prakriti is said to be the cause; in the experience of pleasure and pain, Purusha is said to be the cause. Purusha seated in Prakriti, experiences the *gunas* born of Prakriti; the reason of the birth in good and evil wombs is its attachment to the *gunas*. And he sees who sees Prakriti alone doing all actions, and that the self is actionless.'

'Even a wise man acts in accordance with his own nature: beings follow nature; what can restraint do.' (III, 33).

Attachment and aversion of the senses for their respective objects are natural.

In all these slokas and in various others we find described, the tremendous nature of Prakriti which is likened to Sakti, or McDougall's Horme.

**Gunas**

The three *gunas* Satva, Rajas and Tamas and the degree in which they act upon a man, determine the nature of a man. 'These *gunas* are Satva, Rajas, Tamas ; these *gunas*, O Mighty armed, born of Prakriti, bind fast the indestructible embodied in the body.' These three *gunas* which are in some degree or other, inherent in all human nature, can be traced to McDougall's fourteen instincts.

In chapter XVII verses 2 to 22 clearly define the nature of men who possess the three *gunas*. The *gunas* indicate the action of a man, or conversely, by one's behaviour, we can infer the *guna* which he possesses. These *gunas*, are born of Prakriti. So an ordinary man cannot overcome the works of Prakriti.

'The *gunas* of Prakriti perform all action. With the understanding deluded by egoism, a man thinks, 'I am the doer.'

Again to quote verse 5 Chapter III,

कार्यते द्विवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिर्जेर्जुगैः ॥

'For all are made to act, helplessly indeed, by the Gunas, born of Prakriti.'

'If filled with self-conceit, thou thinkest, "I will not fight," vain is this thy resolve; thy Prakriti will constrain thee.'

So far, we have seen the compelling nature of Prakriti.

It is no wonder that Arjuna, on seeing his kith and kin ready to fight cried out :

'Neither, O Keshava, can I stand upright. My mind is in a whirl. And I see adverse omens.'

Arjuna goes on in this strain, condemning the baseness of war and its evil results. His moral judgments here are the outcome of his emotions. Generally our judgments beget our emotions. If after considering one's qualities, I judge him to be a bad man, I have hatred at the sight of him. The reverse case is also possible. Sometimes our emotions carry us away and tinge our judgments. That is the case here with Arjuna. The dominant emotion ruling in him is pity, a noble emotion without a tinge of the self-regarding pain. In society, moral judgments, based on emotions are not one's own creation. They are the outcome of environmental conditions and social injunctions. In Arjuna the emotion of pity has been roused because of the *tamasik* element (instinct of submission) being predominant. But however, he considers it to be of a nobler type, because of the power of Prakriti.

(To be Continued.)

## THE SUDRA AND THE BRAHMANA

(Adapted from the Buddha's Discourses, *Suttanipata*)

He is a *Vrishala* (*sudra*) who is angry, hateful and is hypocritical ; who despises other's merits and is given to heresy ; who without compassion for living beings, torments them ; who appropriates what is considered as 'mine' by others ; who having really contracted a debt, runs away when asked to pay, saying, "Certainly there is nothing due to you" ; who having coveted something, attains the thing so coveted after killing a person travelling on a road ; who being asked to give his testimony, tells lies, whether it be for his own benefit or for that of others ; who has illicit intercourse with the wives of his relatives or friends, either by force or with their consent ; who with capacity enough to support his aged mother or father, does not do so ; who strikes, or abuses by words, his mother, father, brother, sister, or mother-in-law ; who being asked for what is good, teaches what is not good and conceals something from him ; who having committed a sinful deed says, "Let no one know me as having done it" ; who having gone to another's house and eaten of delicious food, does not return the hospitality when he comes to his own house ; who by falsehood deceives either a Brahmana or Samana ; who abuses by word either a Brahmana or a Samana arriving at meal-time and gives him nothing ; who being mean through self-pride, exalts himself and depreciates others ; who is a provoker of quarrels, is an evil-doer, is envious, cunning or shameless, or devoid of the fear of sin. He indeed, is the lowest *Vrishala*, the thief in all the worlds who without

being a sanctified person pretends to be a saint. Not from birth does one become a *Vrishala*, not from birth does one become a Brahmana. By bad conduct does one become a *vrishala*, by good conduct does one become a Brahmana. Know this also, from the following illustration of mine : There was a son of an outcast, a Matanga of the Sopaka caste. This Matanga attained pre-eminent glory such was difficult to attain, and many Brahmanas and Khattiyas entered his service. He having mounted the divine and passionless Vehicle, the path of the great, cast away sensual desires, and entered the Brahmaloka.

### II

I call him alone a Brahmana who having severed all fetters, does not tremble, and has avoided allurements and remains unshackled ; who has destroyed enmity, attachment, scepticism, with its concomitants, and has demolished ignorance and attained Buddhahood ; who, without anger, endures reproach, torture and bonds and has for his army his own power of endurance ; who is not wrathful, but dutiful, virtuous, unenslaved by lust, and who is subdued ; who, like water on the lotus-leaf, or a mustard-seed on the point of a needle, does not cling to sensuality ; who knows even in this world, how to extinguish afflictions, and has thrown off his burdens ; whose knowledge is profound, who is wise, knows the right and the wrong paths and has attained the highest good ; who mixes not with the householders or with the houseless, nor with both, and who is contended with little ; who has no desire for this world or the next ; who is desireless ; who having

cast off liking and disliking, is passionless, freed from the germs of existence, and is a hero ; who has overcome all the elements ; who knows fully the destruction and regeneration of beings.

One is not a Brahmana nor a non-Brahmana by birth ; by his conduct alone is he a Brahmana, and by his conduct alone one is a non-Brahmana. By his conduct he is a husbandman ; by his conduct he is an artisan ; by

his conduct he is a merchant ; by his conduct he is a servant. By his conduct he is a thief ; by his conduct a warrior ; by his conduct a sacrificer ; by his conduct a king. Thus the wise, see the cause of things, and understand the results of action.

One is a Brahmana by penance, chastity, observance of the moral precepts, and the subjugation of the passions. Such is the best kind of Brahminism.

## SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRAGEDY OF KARBELA

*By Dr. M. Hafiz Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D. Litt.*

On Muawiyah's death, Yezid ascended the throne according to his father's testament. Yezid was both cruel and treacherous, his depraved nature knew no pity nor justice. His pleasures were as degrading as his companions were low and vicious. Drunken riotousness prevailed at court, and was naturally imitated in the streets of the capital. Hussain, the second son of Ali, had inherited his father's virtues and chivalrous disposition. In the terms of peace signed between Muawiya and Hasan, his right to the Caliphate had been expressly reserved.

Hussain had never deigned to acknowledge the title of the tyrant of Damascus, whose vices he despised, and whose character he regarded with abhorrence ; and when the Muslims of Kufa besought his help to release them from the course of the Ommeyade rule, he felt it his duty to respond to the appeal for deliverance.

All Hussain's friends tried to persuade him not to trust the Kufa promises. They knew the Iraqi character. Eager, fierce and impetu-

ous, the people of Kufa were utterly wanting in perseverance and steadiness.

Hussain traversed the desert of Arabia unmolested, accompanied by several of his kinsmen, his two grown-up sons, a few devoted followers, and a timorous retinue of women and children ; but, as he approached the confines of Iraq, he saw no signs of the Kufan army, which had promised to meet him ; he was alarmed by the solitary and hostile face of the country, and suspecting treachery, the Ommeyade's weapon, he encamped his small band at a place called Karbala near the western bank of the Euphrates.

Hussain's apprehensions of betrayal proved only too well-founded. He was overtaken by an Ommeyade army. For days his tents were surrounded and as the murderous ruffians dared not come within the reach of Hussain's sword, they cut the victims off from the waters of the Euphrates, causing terrible suffering to the small band of martyrs. In a conference with the chief of the

enemy, Hussain proposed the option of three honourable conditions: either that he should be allowed to return to Madina, or should be stationed in a frontier garrison against the Turks, or be safely conducted to the presence of Yezid. But the commands of the Ommeyade tyrant were stern and inexorable. No mercy should be shown to Hussain or his party, but they must be brought as criminals before the "Caliph" to be dealt with according to the Ommeyade sense of justice. As a last resource, Hussain besought these monsters not to war upon the helpless women and children, but to take his life and so end the unequal contest. But they knew no pity. Hussain then pressed his friends to ensure their own safety by timely flight; but they unanimously refused to desert or to survive their beloved master. In every single combat and hand-to-hand fight the valour of the Fatimides was invincible. But the enemy's archers picked them off from a safe distance. One by one the defenders fell, until at last there remained but the grandson of the Prophet. Wounded and dying, he dragged himself to the riverside for a last drink, but the enemy's arrows drove him back. Re-entering his tent, he took his infant child in his arms; the child was transfixed with a dart. Then his sons and his nephews were killed in his arms. Able no more to stand up against his pitiless foes, alone, and weary, Hussain scuttled himself at the entrance of his tent. One of the women handed him water to assuage his burning thirst; as he raised it to his lips, he was pierced in the mouth with a dart. He lifted his hands to heaven, and uttered a funeral prayer for the living and the dead. Then raising himself for one desperate charge, he

threw himself among the Ommeyados, who fell back on every side. But faint with loss of blood, he soon sank to the ground, and then murderous crew rushed upon the dying hero. They cut off his head, trampled on his body and, with savage ferocity, subjected it to every ignominy.

It will now be easy to understand, perhaps, to sympathise with the frenzy of sorrow and indignation to which the adherents of *Ali* and of his children give vent on the recurrence of the anniversary of Hussain's martyrdom.

This, in brief, is the authenticated story of the tragedy of Karbala, so well known in all Asiatic countries, where Muslim civilisation has its sway. It is not enough to admire the supremely selfless character of the martyr of Islam. We have to probe deeper in order to get at the true spiritual significance and inner meaning of the struggle, which the illustrious grandson of the Prophet of Islam had to make, and by which he set an immortal example of selfless devotion to duty, complete resignation to the will of God and unswerving devotion to the ideal which he believed to be true.

What was it that sustained Hussain through this crucial ordeal? Why was he so ready to sacrifice at the altar of Divine Love all that was dear and near to him? Why did he remain unmoved in the midst of excruciating pain and insufferably cruel bereavement?

In spite of every possible humiliation and ignominy of every description that he and his family faced, why did he not budge an inch from his firm position?

If he had some control over nature's forces and was endowed with supernatural power, why did he not avert

the tragedy or save his little ones from thirst, starvation and death?

Because, like his holy grandfather, his faith in the unity and the existence of a Power mightier and higher than the mightiest of natural phenomena, was unshakable.

He was a most worthy successor to the spiritual heritage which the holy Prophet of Islam had handed down to him. When conviction, however, had once taken possession of his mind, it was unshakable. No earthly power or friendly persuasion could move him away from his iron resolve.

To him, spiritual life was a reality. He did not pay a mere lip homage to all that was sacred and Divine. He was the truest of believers in God and His messenger and the Life Eternal. He had fully realised that God alone was real, and that earthly life with all its glitter and glamour was hollow and unreal. He knew, beyond the shadow of doubt, that the outer, solid-seeming world was constantly changing, and was therefore transitory. Earthly joys were deceptive. To work in conscious co-operation with the Divine Plan was the manifest duty of every Muslim whose one concern in life must be to do His bidding.

Once he told his elder brother Imam Hasan that he clearly foresaw what was going to happen to him and that he was preparing to lay down his life in order to vindicate the cause of true Islam undaunted by fear or frown. He recognised no power higher than Allah, Whose will must be carried out.

From the outer and physical point of view, he seemed to suffer the pangs of hunger and thirst, pain and anguish; the cries and lamentations of his dearest and nearest kith and kin bruised his heart; but from the

higher point of view, he remained inwardly calm and resigned, as he was in full possession of spiritual life and knew clearly and confidently that outer forms and human bodies were, after all, perishable.

To quote an ancient Indian teacher, "This dweller in the body of everyone is ever invulnerable." As a spiritual being of a high order, Imam Hussain was fully convinced that the human spirit was perpetual and ancient. "Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burneth him, nor waters wet him, nor wind drieth him away." (Gita, II: 23.) It has ever been "perpetual, all-pervasive, stable, immovable, ancient." One who is conscious of his spiritual reality cannot be shaken off his feet by the shattering of outer forms, and frail human bodies.

Not until man identifies himself with the life instead of with the form can the element of pain in sacrifice be got rid of. The law of sacrifice is the law of life-evolution in the universe. Those who look only at the perishing forms see nature as a vast charnel-house; while those who see the deathless soul escaping from the trials and turmoils of earthly life, hear ever the joyous song of Life that knows no end.

Hazrat Imam Hussain's whole heart rushed upwards to the ever merciful God in one strong surge of love and worship, and he gave himself in joyfullest self-surrender to be a channel of His life and love to the world. To him, to be a carrier of His light, a worker in His realm, appeared to be the only life worth living.

God does not endow any one with Divine vision, nor does He reveal His true glory to any one, unless that person surrenders everything to Him.

This in short is the spiritual significance of the Tragedy of Karbala which we have to try to understand and realize in our daily lives if we wish to be worthy of our spiritual heritage. Spiritual life is to be lived.

The examples of saints, sages and martyrs in the path of God should give us heart and courage and inspire us with unshakable confidence in the reality and the right value of life spiritual.

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

Sri Ramakrishna is a force. You should not think that his doctrine is this or that. But he is a power, living even now in his disciples and working in the world. I saw him growing in his ideas. He is still growing. Sri Ramakrishna was both a Jivanmukta and an Acharya.

India will have to carry others' shoes for ever on her head if the charge of imparting knowledge to her sons does not again fall upon the shoulders of Tyagis. Don't you know how an illiterate boy, possessed of renunciation, turned the heads of your great old Pandits? Once at the Dakshineswar Temple, the Brahmin who was in charge of the worship of Vishnu broke a leg of the image. Pandits were brought together at a meeting to give their opinions, and they after consulting old books and manuscripts declared that the worship of this broken image could not be sanctioned according to the Shastras and a new image would have to be consecrated. There was, consequently, a great stir. Sri Ramakrishna was called at last. He heard, and asked, "Does a wife forsake her husband in case he becomes lame?" What followed? The Pandits were struck dumb, all their Shastric commentaries and learned comments could not withstand the force of this simple statement.....That new life-force which he brought with him has

to be instilled into learning and education, and then the real work will be done.

Whatever the Vedas, the Vedanta, and all other incarnations have done in the past, Sri Ramakrishna lived to practise in the course of a single life.

One cannot understand the Vedas, the Vedanta, the Incarnations and so forth, without understanding his life. For, he was the explanation.

From the very date that he was born, has sprung the Satya-yuga (Golden Age). Henceforth there is an end to all sorts of distinctions, and everyone down to the Chandala will be sharers in the Divine Love. The distinction between man and woman, between the rich and the poor, the literate and the illiterate, Brahmanas and Chandalas,—he lived to root out all. And he was the harbinger of Peace—the separation between Hindus and Mohammedans, between Hindus and Christians, all are now things of the past. That fight about distinctions that there was, belonged to another era. In this Satya Yuga, the tidal wave of Sri Ramakrishna's Love has unified all. Whoever—man or woman—will worship Sri Ramakrishna, be he or she ever so low, will be then and there converted into the very highest. Another thing, the Motherhood of God is prominent in this Incarnation. He used to dress

himself as a woman, he was, as it were, our Mother,—and we must likewise look upon all women as the reflection of the Mother. In India there are two great evils. Trampling on the women, and grinding the poor through caste restrictions. He was the Saviour of women, Saviour of the masses, Saviour of all, high and low. Brahmana or Chandala, man or woman,—everyone has the right to worship him. Whoever will worship him only with devotion will be blessed for ever.

There is a peculiar custom in Bengal, which they call *kulaguru*, or hereditary Guruship. "My father was your Guru, now I shall be your Guru. My father was the Guru of your father, so shall I be yours." What is a Guru? Let us go back to the Srutis,—"He who knows the secret of the Vedas," not book-worms, not grammarians, not Pandits in general, but he who knows the meaning. "An ass laden with a load of sandalwood knows only the weight of the wood, but not its precious

qualities," so are these Pandits; we do not want such. What can they teach if they have no realization? When I was a boy here, in this city of Calcutta, I used to go from place to place in search of religion, and everywhere I asked the lecturer after hearing very big lectures, "Have you seen God?" The man was taken aback at the idea of seeing God, and the only man who told me, "I have" was Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and not only so, but he said, "I will put you in the way of seeing Him too." The Guru is not a man who twists and tortures texts.....*Srotriya*, he who knows the secret of the Srutis, *Avrijina*, the sinless and *Akamahata*, unpierced by desire,—he who does not want to make money by teaching you—he is the Santa, the Sadhu, who comes as the spring, which brings the leaves and blossoms to various plants, does not ask anything from the plant for its very nature is to do good. It does good and there it is. Such is the Guru.

## A RESUME OF THE GITA FROM THE VISISHTADVAITIC STANDPOINT

*By Swami Adidevananda*

### II

We now come to the second main book of the Gita. The seventh chapter is an epitome of the second book just as the second chapter is of the first book. This section explains in detail the glory and infinite attributes of the Supreme Divine and points out that the highest Yогin realizes the Supreme Being through ecstatic love alone.

The Bhagavan lays down in the seven<sup>h</sup> chapter that the matter (lower Prakriti) consisting of earth, water,

fire, air, ether, mind, Buddhi and Ahamkara, and souls (higher Prakriti) or subordinate entities and form His modes.<sup>25</sup> He is the origin and dissolution of the whole universe.<sup>26</sup> He interpenetrates everything; everything is threaded in Him like a row of gems strung on a string.<sup>27</sup> He is immanent in everything. He is the sapidity in water, radiance in the moon, Om in the Vedas, sound in Akasa, manhood in men, etc.<sup>28</sup> Though everything proceeds from Him, he is independent of them. To

the earth-bound persons the Supreme is invisible, as he is self-enveloped in his unfathomable veil of Maya. The souls become matter-bound by their contact with matter, though they are endowed with the highest intelligence. They can cross over this illusion, constituted of the Gunas, if they resort to Him as their only refuge.<sup>29</sup> The evildoers and the deluded, deprived of their reason by Maya, follow the way of the Asuras.<sup>30</sup> But the virtuous men worship and adore Him following the dictates of the Dharma.

Among the virtuous men who are approaching the Divine, the Gita distinguishes four kinds of devotees : the distressed (Arta), the seeker of enjoyment (Artharthi), the seeker of knowledge (Jijnasu) and lastly, the Jnanin who adores the Lord with knowledge. All are praised by the Gita as *udaraha*, *sarva evaite*, but the steadfast *bhakta* with knowledge exceeds them all. God is dear to such a devotee and he is dear to God.<sup>31</sup> Very rare is the Mahatman who knows that all this is Vasudeva, the omnipotent Being.<sup>32</sup> Such a great soul at the end of many lives reaches the Supreme.

Incidentally Sri Krishna declares himself to be the Highest Deity though the foolish do not worship him owing to their ignorance. Others again, resort to other Godheads, limited by this or that rite in accordance with their nature. Though they cannot attain the Absolute, the Lord in his infinite mercy grants them their desires, but those fruits are non-eternal.

The various modes of meditation to be followed by the three classes of devotees, namely, the Artharthi, the Jijnasu, and Jnanin are taught in the eighth chapter. It is also suggested that the highest Yogin who remem-

bers the Lord constantly with single-mindedness reaches the highest perfection and is no more subject to Samsara, whereas the seeker after enjoyment who goes to other worlds according to his deserts is subject to the cycle of births and deaths again.

In the ninth chapter the Gita proceeds to unveil the kingly secret of the Supreme Lord who pervades all by his unmanifested form and in whom everything exists, and yet who cannot be contained in any receptacle.<sup>33</sup> His transcendent nature is unaffected though He appears in human incarnations. Those who disregard the indwelling Divinity in the human form, unaware of its higher nature, are bewildered and cannot understand the significance of the Avatara. But the Mahatmas, possessed of the divine nature, know him to be the source of all beings and adore him with a single mind.<sup>34</sup> These extraordinary God-lovers realize the Supreme Divinity by steady and uninterrupted meditation. They seek nothing else except Him and sacrifice their whole being unto Him completely. This is the way of the kingly knowledge and kingly secret.

In the tenth chapter the Bhagavan, after declaring, that he is the origin of all and that everything evolves from him,<sup>35</sup> states his infinite and divine attributes in order to create the true God-love in Arjuna.<sup>36</sup> The whole cosmos is dependent on him for he supports it by a portion of himself.<sup>37</sup>

In the eleventh chapter the Divine Teacher enables his human disciple to realize Him in his Universal form by giving him a spiritual sight. In that infinite Purusha, Arjuna sees the boundless form of the Lord without beginning or middle or end, and from Whom all beings emanate and in Whom they exist and end. It is again

reiterated that exclusive God-love is the sole means for the attainment of the Godhead. Not by the Vedas, not by austerity, not by gifts, not by scriptures, the Universal Form of the Lord can be seen. But by *bhakti* alone He may be seen in reality and also entered into. Doing work for Him alone, having Him for the goal, becoming His devotee, freed from attachment and bearing enmity towards none, the devotee enters into Him.<sup>38</sup>

The second book began with the teaching that God-love is the highest stage and that the God-lover is the greatest Yojin. The twelfth chapter sums up this theme in an unmistakable way, viz., the supreme Path of Love is the only way to the Supreme God of Love who is indeed the Indefinable, the Unmanifested and Imperishable Godhead. The Path of Love is superior to other paths for it is the easiest. The Path of the realization of the Unmanifested is very hard for the embodied. Those who worship the Lord fixing their mind on him with intense Shraddha and longing for communion are considered by the Lord as the best devoted.<sup>39</sup>

If the aspirant is not suited for Bhaktiyoga, he is enjoined to fix his mind on the Lord by Abhyasayoga.<sup>40</sup> If he finds that to be too hard, he may take to Karmayoga, i. e., the performance of action for the sake of God alone. Even by performing actions for the sake of the Lord, he will attain perfection.<sup>41</sup> He who cannot do even this is asked to abandon the fruit of all actions and take refuge in the Lord.<sup>42</sup> This utter indifference to the fruit of all action will certainly purify the aspirant and generate love in him which will ultimately lead him to the highest stage of Bhakti.

What then will be the divine nature of a *bhakta* who has lifted his heart to the adoration of the Eternal? Universal love flows from his heart which has got rid of the narrow ideas of 'I' and 'Mine.' He is equal-minded in pleasure and pain, forbearing, ever content and self-controlled. He is an ocean of tranquillity. By him the world is not troubled nor can he be afflicted by the world. He is freed from the waves of joy, envy, fear and anxiety. Having given up good and evil he neither rejoices nor hates; ever pure and calm, indifferent to all, he has abolished the difference between friend and foe, honour and dishonour. Being equal to all opposite affections which agitate the ordinary man, he fulfils the condition of the Ideal Man of the Gita. The ideal Bhakta who in fervid Shraddha follows this immortal Dharma, regarding the Lord as the Supreme Goal is exceedingly dear to Him.<sup>43</sup>

### III

We now come to the last book of the Gita. The Song Celestial in its last six chapters epitomizes the cardinal teachings of the whole work as explained in the first and second main books. The thirteenth chapter teaches the essential nature of the Kshetra (the field) and the Kshetrajna (the knower of the field). The field and its knower are only two modes of the eternal Lord. This body is designated as Kshetra, and he who knows it is called Kshetrajna. The field is more than our physical body; the Mahabhutas, Ahankara, Buddhi, Avyakta, the ten senses and the mind, the five objects of senses,—all come under the category of the Kshetra.<sup>44</sup> Humility, non-injury, purity, self-control, renunciation of sense-objects, absence of egoism, reflection of evils of birth and death, non-attachment, unswerving

devotion to the Lord, and comprehension of Tatvajnana are declared to be 'knowledge' as they are the means conducive to spiritual knowledge. Here the Bhagavan describes the eternal Supreme Brahman, knowing whom one attains immortality. Though He exists pervading all, he is beyond the limitation of the senses. He is the Light of all lights and beyond all darkness. He is the goal of knowledge and dwells in the hearts of all.

Bondage is the result of soul's contact with matter. Whatever has come into existence is the result of the union between matter and spirit. In the evolution of the body and senses, matter (Prakriti) is said to be the cause; in experiencing joys and sorrows the soul (Purusha) is said to be the cause.<sup>52</sup> Seated in this body is the Supreme Self, Paramatman, the Great Lord, who watches everything, supports all and experiences his manifold creation.<sup>46</sup> He who knows the nature of Prakriti and Purusha is not born again.<sup>47</sup> He sees, who sees that Prakriti alone enacts the whole drama and the soul is not the actor.<sup>48</sup> When he perceives the diversity of existence of all beings as inherent in the One Principle and as evolving forth from it, then he attains Brahman.<sup>49</sup> Those who with the eye of wisdom perceive the distinction between the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna, and also the deliverance from the Prakriti of beings go to the transcendent Brahman.<sup>50</sup>

What is it then that brings the soul, eternal and unborn, into bondage,—the cycle of births and deaths? The Blessed Lord in the fourteenth chapter teaches that the triple qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas born of Prakriti bind the imperishable dweller in the body.<sup>51</sup>

These triple qualities of Prakriti are present in all beings and by their interaction they determine and affect the character of the individual. Sattva attaches to happiness, Rajas attaches to actions while Tamas covering knowledge attaches to misconception.<sup>52</sup> Even the happiness of Sattva is limited and it can bring only impermanent happiness. Obviously, in order to achieve perfect liberation we must transcend the three Gunas and turn to that spiritual power which is beyond Prakriti. When the seer perceives no agents other than the Gunas and knows the soul which is higher than the Gunas, he attains His state.<sup>53</sup>

What, then, are the signs of a man who has realized that power of action in the three Gunas? He sits unconcerned not being moved up by the Gunas. He serves not, knowing that Gunas operate.<sup>54</sup> Another mark is that of equanimity about which the Bhagavan has spoken so often; such a man regards pleasure and pain alike, gold, a clod of earth and stone as equal, agreeable and disagreeable, and praise and blame are the same to him.<sup>55</sup> In short, unattached to any pairs of opposites he transcends the three modes of Prakriti. Finally Sri Krishna declares that the highest realization could be obtained only through His Grace. Whosoever serves Him with unwavering Bhakti transcends the Gunas and is fit to attain the nature of Brahman.<sup>56</sup>

The fifteenth chapter expounds the most secret and profound teaching which leads to the knowledge of the Supreme Person, the Purushottama. The entire universe of mind and matter in all its modifications and the individual souls of various manifestations are the real modes of the Purushottama. It is an eternal portion

of the Lord Himself having become the Jiva in the world of Jivas, veiled in Prakriti, attaches itself to the five senses with mind for the sixth.<sup>57</sup> Two-fold are the souls in the world,—the Kshara and Akshara. All beings belong the Kshara (Perishable) category, and the Kutastha is called the Akshara.<sup>58</sup> The Akshara Purusha who is an *amsa* of the Paramatman is the individual soul when he is disjoined from the bondage of matter and becomes Kshara when bound in matter. But the Supreme Purusha (Uttama Purusha) is another, called the Paramatman, the Immutable Lord, who pervading the three worlds, sustains them<sup>59</sup> (the Kshara and the Akshara). The Uttama Purusha is greater than the Akshara Purusha who in turn is much greater than the Kshara Purusha. The Bhagavan is worshipped as the Purushottama both in the world and by the Vedas for He is above the Kshara and even the Akshara. He who, free from delusion, knows Him, the Purushottama, knows all and worships Him with all his heart.<sup>60</sup>

The sixteenth chapter of the Gita, after prefacing the distinction between the two kinds of being, *viz.*, the Deva and the Asura, teaches about the necessity of our dependence on the sacred Scriptures in order that we may have a correct view of truth and conduct. The Divine nature is surcharged with Sattvic qualities such as fearlessness, purity, self-control, sacrifice, austerity and non-injury. The Asuric nature is characterised by ostentation, arrogance, anger, ignorance and other evil qualitics.<sup>61</sup> While the Divine nature is capable of giving liberation, the Asuric nature is deemed to make way for bondage.<sup>62</sup> The Asuric being, bound by a thousand bonds, devoured by lust, anger and greed,

deluded, doing works for pleasure, ruins his soul. To escape from this inferno of darkness and ignorance, one must increase his Sattvic qualities and turn to the light of the Sastras which embodies in itself the correct standard of truth, religion and ethics. He who, casting aside the ordinance of the Scriptures, acts under the promptings of desire, attains neither perfection, nor happiness nor the Goal Supreme.<sup>63</sup> Therefore the Sastras must be our authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Knowing what has been declared by the ordinance of the Scriptures, one should work in the world.<sup>64</sup>

In the seventeenth chapter Sri Krishna teaches that all works not enjoined by the Sastras are contrary to Dharma and partakes of Asuric nature. Works, yajna, austerity and almsgiving are of three kinds according to the triple kind of faith that dominates our nature. The Sraddha of the embodied is threefold, which is inborn in their nature,—the Sattvika, the Rajasika and the Tamasika.<sup>65</sup> The faith of each person takes the shape according to his natural disposition. Again, the actions sanctioned by the Sastras are associated in their performance with the triple symbol of Om, Tat, Sat. Om is the syllable pronounced as the benedictory prelude for performance of sacrifice, gift and austerity as enjoined in the Sastras. The seekers of Moksha, without desire of fruit, do these actions uttering Tat, —which indicates the Absolute. Sat means goodness and reality of all works done in connection with sacrifice; steadiness in Yajna, Tapas and Dana are also Sat,<sup>66</sup> for they build the edifice for the highest realization. Man is verily made of Sraddha, and any action done without Sraddha is

Asat, and produces no effect conducive to good on earth or beyond.<sup>67</sup>

The eighteenth chapter gives practically the resume of the whole teaching taught in the preceding seventeen chapters. Tyaga or renunciation is not relinquishment of one's duties as some philosophers declare. The real renunciation is the abandonment of the fruit of all actions. If the aspirant goes on working, relinquishing attachment and fruit in keeping with Sattvic manner, it will lead him to the knowledge of the soul. Abandoning egoism, power, pride, lust, wrath, and freed from 'Myness',—this man of peace is fit for absolute realization.<sup>68</sup> The tranquil-minded devotee, after realizing Brahman, neither grieves nor desires; he is equal-minded to all beings and attains supreme Bhakti for the Lord.<sup>69</sup> If one reaches this stage of Bhakti, one would know the Lord in reality and realizing him in his true aspect would enter into him.<sup>70</sup> Taking refuge in Him and doing all actions, the devotee would attain, By His Grace, the eternal and immutable state.<sup>71</sup> The Bhagavan exhorts Arjuna to renounce mentally all actions, to accept Him as the Supreme Goal, and by resorting to Buddhiyoga to fix his mind ever on Him.<sup>72</sup>

The Bhagavan, after having dealt with the analysis of the three Yogas, the essence of his teach-

ings, in a nutshell in the next two verses. 'Be thou of My mind, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me and prostrate unto Me. Myself thou shalt reach; in truth do I promise unto thee, for thou art dear unto Me.'<sup>73</sup>

Renouncing all Dharmas, take refuge in Me alone, I will deliver thee from all sins; grieve not.<sup>74</sup> The great philosophy of life is taught, the Supreme Word is given, and Arjuna the human disciple, once again faces the enemy in the true Aryan fashion, no longer with grief, dejection, ignorance and egoism, but with a robust self-knowledge and selflessness. His illusion destroyed; by the grace of Achyuta he gains back his memory and the truth hidden so long by false conception of religion and conduct reveals itself luminously in his mind; all doubts and perplexity have vanished and he is ready to obey the command of the Divine Charioteer.

### Conclusion

The loftiest message of the Gita is not for those whose minds are occupied with intellectual or academic pursuits; not even for those who interpret it as a gospel of work or a dissertation on Sankhya-yoga. The Lord's message is for those people who can live in God, for God and conduct themselves in such a manner as to please and serve the Highest Being in thought, word and deed. Utter annihi-

20 Bhagavadgita, V. 5. 21 Ibid., V. 6. 22 Ibid., V. 24. 23 Ibid., VI. 40-41.

21 Ibid., VI. 47. 25 Ibid., VII. 4-5. 26 Ibid., VII. 6. 27 Ibid., VII. 7. 28 Ibid., VII. 8-11.

29 Ibid., VII. 14. 30 Ibid., VII. 15. 31 Ibid., VII. 17. 32 Ibid., VII. 19. 33 Ibid., XI. 4-5.

34 Ibid., IX. 13. 35 Ibid., X. 8. 36 Ibid., X. 19-21. 37 Ibid., X. 42. 38 Ibid., IX. 53-55.

39 Ibid., XII. 2. 40 Ibid., XII. 9. 41 Ibid., XII. 10. 42 Ibid., XII. 11. 43 Ibid., XII. 20.

44 Ibid., XIII. 5-6. 45 Ibid., XIII. 20. 46 Ibid., XIII. 22. 47 Ibid., XIII. 23.

48 Ibid., XIII. 29. 49 Ibid., XIII. 30. 50 Ibid., XIV. 4. 52 Ibid., XIV. 9.

53 Ibid., XIV. 19. 54 Ibid., XIV. 23. 55 Ibid., XIV. 24. 56 Ibid., XIV. 28.

57 Ibid., XV. 7. 58 Ibid., XV. 16. 59 Ibid., XV. 17. 60 Ibid., XV. 19. 61 Ibid., XVI. 1-4.

62 Ibid., XVI. 5. 63 Ibid., XVI. 23. 64 Ibid., XVI. 24. 65 Ibid., XVII. 2.

66 Ibid., XVII. 24-27. 67 Ibid., XVII. 28. 68 Ibid., XVIII. 53. 69 Ibid., XVIII. 54.

70 Ibid., XVIII. 55. 71 Ibid., XVIII. 56. 72 Ibid., XVIII. 57. 73 Ibid., XVIII. 65.

74 Ibid., XVIII. 66.

lation of the ego and absolute self-surrender must certainly open for them the royal gateway of Bhakti. Once the neophyte is firmly established in this position, he would be able to perform all his duties in a spirit of offering without attachment to the fruit. With the attainment of tranquillity and concentration of mind, the meditation on God and his auspicious attributes would follow successfully.

Meditation is steady, uninterrupted remembrance, like the continuous flow of oil. Such remembrance has the same meaning as that of 'seeing', or in other words, it has the character of immediate presentation (*Pratyakshata*). He who attains this steady remembrance, marked by the character of direct and continued perception, which itself is very dear, is chosen by the Supreme Being and by him only the Supreme Being is realized. Steady remembrance

of this kind is denoted by the term *Bhakti* which has the same meaning as 'Upasana.'

A God-intoxicated Bhakta cannot for a moment bear the separation from his Beloved. Out of love for love's sake he performs all his actions from the lowest to the highest. Finally he abandons even the idea that such a performance can be a means to the highest End and surrenders himself at the feet of the Lord without any kind of anxiety regarding the performance of work with or without its result. Such a loving Jnanin alone whose sole refuge is God and whose sole occupation is rendering eternal service to Him reaches the Godhead.

The quintessence of the Gita from the prologue to the epilogue has one central theme,—that exclusive God-love is the only means to God-realization and absolute self-surrender to God is the only means to the supreme bliss, the Brahmanandam.

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA

*By Justice N. Chandrasekhara Iyer, B.A., B.L.*

Even an advanced spiritual aspirant as Arjuna had to ask of the Lord the characteristics of a *sthita-prajna*—the man of steady wisdom and knowledge. Sri Krishna in response to his request gives at the end of the second chapter of the Gita a vivid picture of the *sthita-prajna*. Arjuna was satisfied with this description for he saw in his divine charioteer the person described. But how can we, lesser men be satisfied with a mere description of a sage. We must see with our own eyes a person who embodies in himself such saintly virtues. That is why from time to time God sends to us such men as

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, so that we may realise that His words are true.

The birth of such men is designed and purposeful. Whenevver there is danger of evil overcoming good, and righteousness yielding to wrong, and whenever the innocent, the pure and the godly suffer at the hands of the wicked, the Lord creates himself and is born in mortal frame to secure a redress of the balance and to see that Dharma triumphs. This is a cardinal teaching of the Gita in which every devout Hindu believes. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was such a

manifestation of the Lord and was born in this country at a particular crisis when the outlook for our religion was dark and gloomy, and when it seemed as though India had come almost to the last page of her spiritual history. An aggressive, materialistic, and dazzling civilisation had almost conquered this country culturally and its educated men and women had almost become slaves to alien manners, habits, fashions and modes of thought, temporal as well as spiritual. The culture of India and its age-long beliefs, traditions and philosophy were in the melting pot. The orthodox and ultra-conservative school of thought were indifferent to the ominous signs and looked on the change with aloofness. Reform movements like the Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj, tried their best to bring back the educated youths to a proper appreciation and realisation of their own great heritage, culture and ideals. But the situation required the appearance of Sri Ramakrishna to bring about a solid and healthy religious revival and reformation, to place Indian religion and philosophy once again on their high pedestal and to infuse self-respect and self-confidence in the minds of many intellectuals of those days who were ready to cast away, in a spell of delusion, things of the spirit for the sake of tinsel materialism.

Sri Ramakrishna was not by any means a learned man in the modern sense. He was not well-versed in the *Sastras* and he did not go beyond the study of rudiments at his school. Early in life, domestic necessity compelled him to become a temple priest, an office regarded then as now with a certain amount of contempt and scorn. The humble situation of his birth and occupation and the absence of opportunities for acquiring a vast store of

knowledge did not, however, prevent Sri Ramakrishna from forging ahead by rapid marches to the attainment of the highest state of liberation. His longing to see God became intense and passionate. His strenuous and unremitting endeavours to achieve this end told on his frail physical body. But undaunted, he passed through every stage of *Sadhana* till he realised God and became one with Him—a Jivanmukta. Gurus came to him unsought to guide him in his onward journey. But it is no exaggeration to say that he became the Guru of Gurus soon enough. He accumulated within himself a vast storehouse of spiritual energy and force which radiated in all directions and drew to him countless devotees and disciples. But for him, we may not have had our dear Vivekananda. Had Sri Ramakrishna no other achievement to his credit except to make us a gift of such a precious jewel, the Paramahamsa would have justly merited our eternal gratitude. But is Vivekananda the only gift he has left for us? No. The shining example of his life, the great message of hope, spiritual solace and peace that he has left for us, the noble mission of revivification of our religion that he so notably fulfilled are all our priceless possessions now.

His devotion to the Lord became so intense that he often forgot himself and his environment and became merged in the Absolute. Truly he became God-intoxicated. He used to say ‘this world is a huge lunatic asylum where all men are mad, some after money, some after women, some after name or fame and a few after God. I prefer to be mad after God.’

Those who have read Sri Ramakrishna’s life and the religious and spiritual experiences he passed through, can easily realise for them-

selves that he reached the highest form of *Atma Vidya*. Often, his fits of God-consciousness or trances, created much consternation among his disciples and great effort was required on their part to bring him back to this mundane plane.

Sri Ramakrishna's spirituality was contagious and galvanised every one who came in contact with him. He was simple and artless like a child. He was pure as snow and his love for humanity knew no bounds. He taught without affectation and without appearing to teach. He assumed no dictatorial tone. He spoke homely words and the lessons that he gave to those who sought him were pregnant with spiritual insight and wisdom. As is often the case with such prophets, he spoke frequently in parables, which drove the highest philosophical truths into men's minds as no amount of finished oratory could have done. His language was direct and whenever he spoke, there was a straight appeal from heart to heart. Though he had himself reached the highest state of spiritual perfection, he believed that a true sannyasin at the present day had a mission to fulfil apart from striving for his own individual progress and salvation. When Swami Vivekananda was inclined to think differently, he chided him with these memorable words : "Shame on you ! I thought you were to be the great banian tree giving shelter to thousands of weary souls. Instead, you are selfishly seeking your own well being. Let these little things alone, my child."

Though he was an embodiment of the highest Advaita philosophy, he was never tired of preaching that every one must do his allotted work or dharma. Having renounced everything in this world, recoiling from the

sight of gold and wealth as if from sin and regarding every woman as a manifestation of the Divine Mother, he still laid great emphasis on the life of the householder and the great part such a life plays in the proper and beneficent structure of society. A great *Gnani* himself, he held up the ideal of the *Karma Yogi* as one for most of us to cherish and follow. To an apparent observer, he seemed a bundle of contradictions ; but underneath the surface, there ran through a remarkable unity of thought, action and purpose.

Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings have a peculiar significance and appeal to us at the present moment when we are passing through one of the greatest catastrophies that has ever overtaken the world. A terrible and merciless war has drawn the whole world into its vortex and is very near our gates, if not actually over us. Profound thinkers of the East and the West alike have reiterated their conviction that this strife, born of national greed, ambition and lust for power might have been averted if men had not pinned their faith so much in science and inventions and sordid materialism but had stood deep rooted in true spirituality and in the eternal teachings common to all religions. Swami Vivekananda has said, that the holy sages or seers, who out of their disinterestedness and selfless love for humanity, think a few thoughts for the world's well-being in their obscure caves have potent influence over man's destinies. They do more for the world than all the so-called reformers put together ; their thoughts live for ever and work miracles. They are the children of Light ; they are the children of God. In their presence anger and animosities vanish ; the lion and the lamb lie together ;

the assassin lays down his cruel knife; and the robber gives up his avocation; saintliness pervades everywhere and a calm peace reigns supreme. It is they that help individual as well as national regeneration.

Surely in times such as these, messengers of God like the Paramahamsa preaching universal peace, goodwill

and harmony and upholding the paragon of spiritual life are sorely needed. They are the beacon lights to guide our faltering steps in our onward march. They are the peaks which must ever be present before our eyes if we are to keep on the straight road. They are the blessed, real saviours of humanity.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

"As we forgive them that trespass against us" is a phrase which must be thought of as qualifying all the clauses of the prayer. Forgiving is merely a special case of giving, and the word may be taken to stand for the whole scheme of non-egotistic life, which is at once the condition and the result of enlightenment. As we forgive, or, in other words, as we change our "natural", egotistic attitude towards our fellow beings, we shall become progressively more capable of hallowing the name of God, of doing God's will and co-operating with God to make His kingdom come. Moreover, the daily bread of grace, without which nothing can be achieved, is given to the extent to which we ourselves give and forgive. If one is adequately to love God, one must love one's neighbors—and one's neighbors include even those who have trespassed against us. Conversely, one must love God, if one is adequately to love one's neighbors. In the spiritual life, every cause is also an effect, and every effect is at the same time a cause.

We have now to consider in what sense God forgives our trespasses or

debts, as we forgive our debtors, or those who trespass against us.

On the human level, forgiveness is the waiving of an acknowledged right to payment or punishment. Some of these acknowledged rights are purely arbitrary and conventional. Others, on the contrary, seem to be more fundamental, more closely in accord with what we regard as just. But these fundamental notions of justice are the notions of the "natural", unregenerate man. All the great religious teachers of the world have insisted that these notions must be replaced by others—the thoughts and intuitions of the liberated and enlightened man. The Old Law is to be replaced by the New, which is the law of love, of *mahakarun*, of universal compassion. If men are not to enforce their "rights" for payment or punishment, then most certainly God does not enforce such rights. Indeed, it is absurd to say that such "rights" have any existence in relation to God.

Since God has no "rights" to enforce, he can never be thought of as waiving such "rights." And since he is the principle of the world, he cannot suspend those laws or make exceptions to those uniformities, which are the manifestation of that principle. Does this mean, then, that God cannot for

give our debts and trespasses? In one sense it certainly does. But there is another sense in which the idea of divine forgiveness is valid and profoundly significant. Good actions and thoughts produce consequences which tend to neutralize, or put a stop to, the results of evil thoughts and actions. For as we give up the life of self (and note that, like forgiveness, repentance and humility are also special cases of giving), as we abandon what the German mystics called "the I, me, mine," we make ourselves progressively capable of receiving grace. By grace we are enabled to know reality more completely, and this knowledge of reality helps us to give up more of the life of self-hood—and so on, in a mounting spiral of illumination and regeneration. We become different from what we were and, being different, cease to be at the mercy of the destiny which, as "natural," unregenerate beings, we had forged for ourselves by our evil thoughts and actions. Thus the Pharisee who gives up his life of self-esteeming respectability and uncharitable righteousness, becomes capable thereby of receiving a measure of grace, ceases to be a Pharisee and, in virtue of that fact, ceases to be subject to the destiny forged by the man he once was and is no more. The making oneself fit to receive grace is effective repentance and atonement; and the bestowal of grace is the divine forgiveness of sins.

In a rather crude form, this truth is expressed in the doctrine which teaches that merits have the power to cancel out their opposites. Moreover, if divine forgiveness is the bestowal of grace, we can understand how vicarious sacrifices and the merits of others can benefit the soul. The enlightened person transforms not merely himself, but to some extent the world around

him. The unregenerate individual is more or less completely without real freedom; only the enlightened are capable of genuinely free choices and creative acts. This being so, it is possible for them to modify for the better the destinies unfolding around them by inspiring the makers of these destinies with the wish and the power to give, so that they may become fit to receive the grace which will transform them and so deliver them from the fate they had been preparing for themselves.

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for *thine* is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

The nature of the evil from which we pray to be delivered is defined by inference in the succeeding phrase. Evil consists in forgetting that kingdom, power and glory are God's and acting upon the insane and criminal belief that they are ours. So long as we remain average, sensual, unregenerate individuals, we shall constantly be tempted to think God-excluding thoughts and perform God-eclipsing actions. Nor do such temptations cease as soon as the path of enlightenment is entered. All that happens is that, with every advance achieved, the temptations become more subtle, less gross and obvious, more profoundly dangerous. Belial and Mammon have no power over the advanced; nor will they succumb when Lucifer offers them his more material baits, such as worldly power and dominion. But for souls of quality Lucifer also prepares more rarefied temptations and many are those, even far advanced along the road to enlightenment, who have succumbed to spiritual pride. It is only to the perfectly enlightened and the completely

liberated that temptations do not present themselves at all.

The final phrases of the prayer reaffirm its central, dominant theme, which is that God is everything and that man, as man, is nothing. Indeed, man, as man, is less than nothing; for he is a nothing capable of evil, that is to say capable of claiming as his own the things that are God's and, by that act, cutting himself off from God. But though man, as man, is nothing and can make himself less than nothing by becoming evil, man as the knower and lover of God, man as the possessor of a latent, inalienable spark of godhead, is potentially everything. In the words of Cardinal Berulle "man is a nothing surrounded by God, indigent of God, capable of God and filled with God if he so desires." This is the central truth of all spiritual religion, the truth that is, so to say, the major premise of the Lord's Prayer. It is a truth which the ordinary unregenerate man or woman finds it hard to accept in theory and harder still to act upon. The great religious teachers have all thought and acted theocentrically; the mass of ordinary human beings think and act anthropocentrically. The prayer which comes naturally to such people is the prayer of petition, the prayer for concrete advantages and immediate help in trouble. How profoundly different this is from the prayer of an enlightened being! Such a being prays not at all for himself, but only that God may be worshipped loved and known by him as God ought to be worshipped, loved and known—that the latent and potential seed of

reality within his own soul may become fully actualized. There is even a kind of irony to be found in the fact that this prayer of Christ's—the theocentric prayer of a supremely enlightened being—should have become the prayer most frequently repeated by millions upon millions of men and women, who have only a very imperfect notion of what it means and who, if they fully realized its revolutionary significance, so immensely remote from more or less kindly humanism by which they govern their own lives, might even feel rather shocked and indignant. But in the affairs of the spirit, it is foolish to think in terms of large numbers and "public opinion." It may be true that the Lord's Prayer is generally misunderstood, or not understood at all. Nevertheless it is a good thing that it should remain the most familiar formula used by a religion which, particularly in the more "liberal" of its contemporary manifestations, has wandered so far from the theocentrism of its founder, into an entirely heretical anthropocentrism or, as we now prefer to call it, "humanism." It remains with us, a brief and enigmatic document of the most uncompromising spirituality. Those who are dissatisfied with the prevailing anthropocentrism have only to look into its all too familiar, and therefore uncomprehended depths, to discover the philosophy of life and the plan of conduct for which they have been looking hitherto in vain.

(Extract from Aldous Huxley's article in the "Vedanta and the West").

## HOLY TALKS

*By Swami Yatiswarananda*

Unless feeling transforms a man altogether and makes him live a better life, feeling has no spiritual value. Unless knowledge transforms a man altogether, knowledge has no spiritual value. Unless work transforms a man altogether and changes his life, work has no spiritual value at all.

Any form of Sadhana must bring about a complete transformation of the life of a person, a complete transformation of ourselves in all our aspects, must bring about a new attitude towards everything, all problems, all questions of life, must make us stop all unconscious thinking and acting and transform us into wide-awake, living, fully conscious individuals. Everything else only stands in the way of our spiritual evolution. And the real importance of Sadhana is this transforming power of the spiritual practices if they are performed regularly, doggedly, intensely for a long period of time, day by day without any break.

If your subconscious is not dissolved, real progress is not possible. No end of bubbles continually rise from the depths of the subconscious and make us do things we should not do, think thoughts that should not be thought, keep us in a state of perfect slavery. We have not yet become responsible beings at all.

We live on impulses and think impulse-driven and impulse-rooted thoughts, and still believe that such a state is freedom, guided as we are by impulses and animal reactions!

Vedanta always puts great stress on consciousness, purified conscious-

ness, consciousness that has really become conscious in ourselves.

There must be a thorough, merciless, dispassionate overhauling of all our conceptions of freedom. License has nothing to do with freedom. Sex-indulgence has nothing to do with freedom or true manhood. Hatred and anger have nothing to do with freedom. A person is a slave to his senses and thinks he is free, he is a man. That is the fun. When a helpless slave believes he is free and behaves in a slavish manner, there is no hope for him. Freedom is very different from all this.

Only through a life of great spiritual discipline and great control of all our impulses can we get a glimpse of the great eternal freedom that is within everyone of us. What we call freedom very often is the freedom of a cat or a dog. It is so absurd to hear all these slaves talk about freedom and manhood. Who is free? Certainly not they whatever they may think. No one is free who has not developed his higher faculties and become master of his subconscious. We cannot just act as if the subconscious did not exist.

The way to freedom lies not in becoming helpless and being guided by desires and passions, by all sorts of animal cravings, by likes and dislikes, but by controlling, consciously controlling, all desires and passions, all feelings of attraction and aversion, and remaining wide-awake at all times. If we do not do this, no amount of reading will be of any avail.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRI AUROBINDO MANDIR ANNUAL: PUBLISHED BY SRI AUROBINDO MANDIR. 15, COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA. SOLE DISTRIBUTORS: ARYA PUBLISHING HOUSE. 63, COLLEGE STREET, CALCUTTA. PP. 232. ILLUSTRATED. ROY. OCTAVO. PRICE RS. 3—8—0.

This Jayanti Number is a worthy memorial to the many-sided genius of Sri Aurobindo. The sixteen contributions brought together in this volume, form, as it were, the sixteen phases of the moon together shedding the mingled light of a vigorous philosophy and exalted way of life. Through these erudite and perspicuous essays one gets a peep into the mind of a great practical mystic, an unusually daring philosophic thinker, an efficient but silent teacher, a vivacious and profound artist and an extraordinarily original and learned investigator into the heart of holy and hoary Aryan scriptures. All contributions are from the pen of scholars who have achieved distinction in the exposition of the respective aspect they have chosen to study, besides a genuine devotion for the greatness of Sri Aurobindo's inspiring personality. Hence the volume is truly authoritative, representative and instructive. The publishers deserve the gratitude of all lovers of culture, and the work deserves to be placed in all libraries.

THE STREAM DIVINE: NINE DISCOURSES OF BHAGAVAN SHRI SHUKACHARYAJI MAHARAJ IN GUJARATI. TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY P. M. TRIVEDI, M.A., DIP. G. (LOND.) F.R.G.S. PP. 152. PRICE RE. ONE. PUBLISHERS: N. M. TRIPATHI & CO., BOOKSELLERS, BOMBAY.

'His Holiness Shree Shukacharyaji Maharaj of Ankleshvar' writes the translator, 'to whose philosophical discourses we have devoted these pages is believed to be the reincarnation of Shri Sukadovji, the giver of Srimad Bhagavatam'. This religious teacher believed in the synthesis of true religious ideals; 'Never did he offend the religious susceptibilities of any creed,—but on the contrary he respected all of them because he had discovered a subterranean current of unity in all creeds and in all faiths'. These inspiring discourses contain many valuable suggestions to advance the spiritual life and deepen the religious convictions of the Hindus of today. The short of Sri Shukacharyaji's message is: 'You may belong to any community, you may subscribe to any code of ethics amenable to the reforming influence of the times; but let your soul awaken and fuse into divinity'. The discourses translated here only form a part of the original in Gujarati. These nine discourses, however, explain *svadharma*, *ashramayoga*, Devotion, Knowledge, etc., in a simple style. In these days when the country is flooded with

secular literature, often of a degenerating kind, it is hopeful to see that the message of godliness also receives attention at least here and there.

SRI RAMANA, THE SAGE OF ARUNAGIRI: BY AKSHARAJNA (G. R. SUBBARAMAYYA) PUBLISHED BY SRI RAMASRAM, TIRUVANNAMALAI. PP. 60. PRICE 5 AS.

The brochure gives a beautiful account of the early days of Sri Ramanamaharshi and a spirited interpretation of his luminous life. The author has kept in mind the rich spiritual traditions of India, while writing these pages, and this has added to its charm.

MINOR WORKS OF SRI SANKARACHARYA: BY Y. SUBRAHMANYA SHARMA. ADHYATMAPRAKASHA KARYALAYA, HOLENARASIPUR. PP. 78. PRICE AS. 10. POSTAGE EXTRA.

Sixteen of Sri Sankara's inspiring hymns and philosophical tracts are here printed in Devanagiri script and accurately and faithfully translated into English with some foot-notes helpful to the ordinary student. The selection is excellent and truly representative. By reading, memorizing, contemplating, and reciting these choicest verses (numbering 101 in total) with a pure mind, and living the spirit conveyed through them, one is sure to reach Truth and blessedness.

VEDANTA BALA BODHA: (KANNADA) SAME AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER AS THAT OF THE ABOVE. PP. 42. PRICE AS. 4

The author presents here great Advaitic truths with admirable simplicity for the uninitiated seeker of the highest truth. We hope it will be widely read by the Kannada-speaking public.

A HINDU VIEW OF CULTURE: ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. BY K. GURU DUTT, MYSORE CIVIL SERVICE. (PRICE NOT STATED).

Twelve of the essays and addresses which the writer has given on various occasions are here printed in book form. The articles possess genuine worth to deserve permanence in the present form. The purpose of the book is to represent culture as Purushartha and a synthesis of work and contemplation. We feel that the author has succeeded in presenting his view rationally and attractively. The book will win the appreciation of educated youths interested in true culture—this is our hope and wish.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### CYCLONE RELIEF

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION'S WORK.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDAJI, SECRETARY,  
RAMAKRISHNA MISSION WRITES UNDER DATE  
21—1—'43 :—

The Ramakrishna Mission has been carrying on cyclone relief work since the last week of October, against enormous difficulties of supply and transport. The area taken covers 228 villages, in the Khejuri, Nandigram and Mayna Thanas of the Midnapur District, the Saugor Thana of 24-Parganas, and the Bhograi Thana of the Balasore District. In the week ending on the 10th January, 1943, our 10 centres distributed 321 mds. 20 srs. of rice, 3201 mds. 25 srs. of paddy, 80 mds. 22 srs. of dal, 3922 pieces of new cloth, 23 chaddars, numerous used clothes, 762 blankets, 20 shirts and frocks, 5 mats, among 50,112 recipients as well as 28 srs. of powdered milk and 7 srs. of barley for children.

Our total receipts up to the 21st January, 1943 are Rs. 2,71,318/-, and our total expenditure about Rs. 2,10,524/-. We have also received articles worth approximately Rs. 83,000/-. Our weekly expenditure is roughly Rs. 25,000/-.

The unprecedented nature of the disaster and the incalculable damage done to life and property are already well known to the public. In view of the total loss of crops and complete destruction of dwelling houses, the work of gratuitous relief should be continued at least up to the end of February. The limited funds at our disposal, however, will not permit us to continue our work after the first week of February.

We convey our grateful thanks to the generous donors whose active sympathy has enabled us to carry on our work so far, and earnestly appeal to the benevolent public to make further sacrifices for helping thousands of our helpless sisters and brothers, who are still suffering much for want of food and water, clothes and shelter, and for falling a prey to epidemic diseases. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following address : The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, DACCAS, REPORT FOR THE YEARS 1940 & '41.

The Mission Branch at Dacca was affiliated to the Head Quarters in 1916. Since then it has been progressing in its humanitarian activities.

*The charitable Dispensary.*—The Homoeopathic Outdoor Dispensary treated 6254 in 1940 and 3811 in 1941.

*Free Schools*—Four free schools are being run by the Mission, the total strength being 400 students. Of the four, two are Girls' Schools one at Faridabad and the other at Brahmankitta.

*Libraries and Reading Rooms.*—The Mission has been conducting two free Libraries containing books in Bengali, Sanskrit, and English on Religion, Philosophy and other allied subjects. There is a free Reading Room attached to each of these Libraries. The Mission also did propaganda through religious discourses and tours.

The urgent needs of the Mission seem to be a shrine, books for the Libraries and a permanent fund of Rs. 50,000.

The total receipts for the year 1940 was Rs. 6,888.5.4 and expenses came to Rs. 3,429.1.9. The total receipts for the year 1941 was Rs. 6,879.12.9 and the expenses was Rs. 2,952.14.3.

#### SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, OOTACAMUND. REPORT FOR 1942.

The Ashrama at Ootacamund has been steadily extending its cultural influences among all sections of people on the hills.

The three weekly classes continued to be held. Special lectures were delivered by the Swamis of the Mission who visited the hills. The inmates of the Ashrama visited over fifteen villages on the Nilgris along with Bhajan.

The Library and Reading Room is open to the public.

During the year, Sivaratri, Buddha Jayanti and such other Birthdays of prophets were celebrated. The most important celebration was the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna. More than 3000 *daridra-narayanas* were fed on the occasion.

The total collection for the year was Rs. 2,191.2.6 and expenses was Rs. 1,802.13.2. The Ashrama authorities appeal for the continued warm support of its sympathisers.

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A NEW INSPIRATION FOR THE AGE

We see before us things and values falling or are being felled to the ground and thirsting for solace, we search with anxious eyes amongst the falling forms for that tower of Truth which, we have been assured, is invulnerable and shall weather all storms. We turn and come upon that embarrassing scene of Truth on the scaffold. With deep and poignant sighs of helplessness we swallow the bitter truth of the situation. We look up and in compelled resignation ask, 'yes, when was not Truth on the scaffold?'. The Rome of Pilate two thousand years ago preferred to set the Nazarene free, but the world with one voice cried, 'crucify him'. And yet if the religions of the world exhort us to go out into this persecuting, ununderstanding world and lift it to spiritual heights, it is because religion can make man strong enough to perform the rather impossible feat of raising the world and be uncrucified. Christ did the feat successfully : Of course, in the attempt he died on the

cross ; but then he began to live. He lives to this day for while alive in the body he was fully awake in the spirit. He was a *yogi* who lived, moved and had his being in God and so he not only transformed the poisonous currents of worldly afflictions into the divine waters of peace and calm but flooded with them many a spiritual vacuum. Even when the brimming cup of suffering was held up to him by his enemies, he prayed for their forgiveness.

An equally imposing picture is that of Sri Ramakrishna in the last days of his earthly sojourn. His feeble body was 'being daily consumed in the fire of ecstasy and he was worn out by his constant gift of himself to the famished crowds'. He was, in his own words, nothing but a burst drum and yet he never turned anybody away. Instead, he said : 'Let me be condemned to be born over and over again, even in the form of a dog, if so, I can be of help to a single soul ! I will give up twenty-thousand such bodies to help

one man. It is glorious to help even one man.' These words can come only from the abode of an eternal power of calm and profound tranquillity that not only persist in the white heat of suffering but transmute it. They are full of that immortal power, capable of all action attuned to deepest delight and open to the profoundest love and compassion and to supreme bliss. Sri Ramakrishna reproached himself for his ecstasies, because they took time that might, otherwise have been given to others : 'O Mother,' cried he, 'stop me from enjoying them ! Let me stay in my normal state, so that I can be of more use to the world.'

Until one amasses such abundance of self-giving stamina which is essentially spiritual, it is disastrous for him and the world if he starts on helping the world. 'Is it so small a thing' asks Sri Ramakrishna, 'the world to which you desire to do good?' 'Pray, who are you to do good to the world? First, go through devotional practices and see God. Then it is that inspiration and power will come to you and you may talk of doing good.' Such inspiration and power are born of an intense feeling that the world is one's own kith and kin. One must establish conscious contact with one's own spiritual centre, the Divine within and must realize it to be the cosmic centre as well, and thus become the gauge and centre of the world before one can begin any work of world amelioration. It is a process of *interiorization* of strength; hence the emphasis of religions on life, on the irrigation of strength and life from God, the one source of everything. 'Living the life' says Swami Vivekananda, 'in one word, *anubhuti*, realization is the thing. Let there be but a dozen such lion-souls in each

country, lions who have broken their own bonds, who have touched the infinite and these will be enough to shake the world. And Ramakrishna had given us one great gift, the desire and the life-long struggle not to talk alone but to live the life.' His life, a thousand-fold more than his teaching was in itself a potent message of the Divine to the Divine in us.

How did the Master make this imperfect, hollow reed of a mortal life bear the strain of divine inflation may be a wonderful enigma to many of us mortals. First, by safeguarding life against its own wasteful vagaries. He closed the doors through which life escaped into the Hadean caverns of lust, wrath and creaturely craving. The energies thus gathered were purified by him by an upward turn given to them. The Upanishadic teaching to realize the Divine Reality by *tapas* (austerity) was eloquent in his life both in its negative and positive aspects. *Kamastyagah tapahmritah*: The abandonment of desire in all forms is *tapas*. Not only did he make this a blazing reality but gave a popular and appealing rendering of it for the benefit of the world. The Master insisted on the complete eschewing of Kamini and Kanchana, of lust and wealth, as these were powerful weapons in the hands of the animal and possessive instincts and so the breakers of God's sanctum. Life he averred, has to be lifted high to touch the Infinite ; and for this the aspirant should keep clear of the poisonous streams of impulsive animal life. Our present life is nothing but an eddy of irrational animal impulses, of strong likes and dislikes, of hatred and weakness and we nothing but passion-ridden, passion-driven slaves. Hence our life-stream has to be refin-

ed over and over again to deserve the confluence of the Divine into it, through a negative and positive process, by ridding it of its noxious elements and by reinforcing it by a divine content through intense meditation of the Supreme—*Ityetat tapaso rupam dhyanaṁcha paramesh-thinah.* And for him concentration on the Divine was an easy and immediate possibility. He said, ‘the wind of Divine grace is ever-blowing. It is all a question of unfurling your sails.’ Here is the fire of *anubhava* (spiritual experience) welding the negative and positive aspects of *sadhana* with an ease rare in religious teachers.

Negative counsels we have enough in our religions with all their stress on self-denial and world negation. But negation loses its point when not directed towards affirmation. Self-denial is a waste of effort unless it paves the way for self-affirmation. It is the purpose in the suffering that makes the martyr and not the suffering by itself. Positive teaching also we have enough in the doctrine of the immense Divine grace that Hinduism teaches. But the organization and consolidation of these two aspects in a way beneficial to life is a desideratum. Sri Ramakrishna’s spiritual genius removed this lack. He by himself could testify in amazing degree to the all-embracing vastness of Divine Grace. He gathered even the most heinous sinner to his bosom, took upon himself his sins and anointed him with spiritual unction and made him fit for the Lord’s offering. Suffering was to him a glory and a gain when directed towards the bestowal of grace on mortals, towards the lofty variety of service that he did to humanity. To him God in his infinite love lives in every atom that

is, in every *jiva* that lives. So then the emphasis with which he urged us to give up lust and wealth for a higher life stands with equal force against the limiting of the infinitude of God within any narrow bounds. One of his own choice utterances was that those who have seen the chameleon only once, know only one colour of the animal; but those who have lived under the tree, know all the colours that it puts on. As one who has always lived under the tree of Divine Grace, the Master is best fitted to speak of its infinite colours and who can render to us with authenticity his words except his disciples, the lights that were lit from that blazing fire!

We linger a while on the Master’s teaching on Kamini Kanchana to see a little more into their psychological depth and be profited by the suggestions they offer for the cure of modern social ills.

Psychologists of the day speak with one voice that the reign of unbridled force that is on now has been the outcome of life having descended to instinct level. They attribute all the gruesome maladies of the day to ‘instinct’ having become the prime mover of human activity instead of Pure Reason or a spiritualised will. According to them, of the many forms in which ‘instinct’ lifts up its hydra’s head, the grabbing possessive instinct is the most pernicious today. Insatiable lust for possession of wealth, power and other enjoyments of the flesh has made men and nations mad and have involved them in this wholesale massacre of humanity. The drunkenness of wrath, desire and lust which rule the earth now are the brood of this instinct of possession which in turn is born of an exaggerated Ego. Rightly does the Gita trace the

Asuric Nature to the cult of Ego: 'They (Asuric men) follow always the cult of Desire and Ego. Arrogant, full of self-esteem and pride, these misguided souls delude themselves. Bound by a hundred bonds, devoured by wrath and lust, unweariedly occupied in amassing unjust gains, they always think, 'I am the Lord and king of men; I am perfect and accomplished; I am of high birth; who is there like unto me?'. In the egoism of their strength and power, in the violence of their wrath and arrogance, they hate, despise and belittle the God hidden in themselves and the God in man. They lose their way to Him altogether and sink down into the lowest rung of soul-nature, *adhamam gatim*.

It is worthwhile remembering that Freud comes very near the conception of the Gita when he puts the ego impulse as strong as the libido. His idea that libido, the primal energy is the driving force of all human action urges acceptance in the light of the Gita's teaching. When Arjuna asks the Lord what is that by which, as if by force one is compelled to sin, the Lord replies: 'It is desire—it is anger, born of the Rajo-guna'. The libido then is this Rajo-guna fed by desire, anger and great craving, and even as the Gita urges sublimation of the Rajo-guna into Sattva as essential for spiritual unfoldment, Freud maintains that the libido is a transmutable form of energy furnishing after refinement the power for the characteristically 'civilized' activities of human beings. Civilization according to Freud is the outcome of repression—or to use spiritual terminology, sublimation—of the primal energy. Of all creation man knows the art of self-repression, of inhibition best and that is why he

has been able to ascend to spiritual heights unscalable by other species.

As this stage the Master's contribution comes as the crown to this trend of thought: 'Try to gain absolute mastery over the sexual instinct. If one succeeds in doing this, a psychological change is produced in the body by the development of a hitherto rudimentary nerve known as Medha, the function of which is to transmute the lower energies into the higher.' Here is ample testimony to the deep insight the Master had into the psychology of the sex instinct, the morbidities it may lead to and the sublimation that it is capable of. And what the Master speaks of as a physical transformation in those who sublimate the primal energy is the result of his yogic attainments. 'The knowledge of the higher self' continues he, 'is gained after the development of this Medha-nerve.' After the dawn of the knowledge of this higher self, one's lower self naturally chooses to merge itself in the former. The Bhakta loses himself in his Ishtam. Even so was the fulfilment of the Bhakti *sadhanas* of the Master. But the realization of complete Oneness was still not his and so the Master went through the mysterious gates of mystical experience when his self in its wonderful power of expansion began to unravel itself or waste itself like the incense in the censer or the salt-doll in the ocean until the Only One remained. And this was the acme of his Advaitic realizations. The experience resulted in an upward transference of the Master's centre of being and the consequent transformation of his whole existence and consciousness with a resultant change in life and in the motive of his actions. Even in the heart of action he felt he

could repose in the tranquillity and calm of the supreme. Then and then alone did the Master think of teaching Karmayoga to aspirants, of imparting to the world the secret of uplifting oneself and the world even when the world returned evil for good.

Thus did the Master come to the consummation of all Paths, to the confluence of Yoga, Bhakti, Jnana and Karma, to the summit of all spiritual *sadhana*. Then only did he think himself fit to give to the world the wealth of his divine realizations. Society menaced as it is today with the baneful luxuriance of Asuri Sampath, cries for such Daivi Sampath as Sri Ramakrishna can give in abundance. His life proves that the greatest breadth, self-control, godliness, truth, calm and compassion can exist side by side in the same individual and that society can be constructed like that, for society is nothing but an aggregate of individuals. The formation of such a character is the ideal of this age.

We have to search for long in his teachings before we can find where exactly he places his finger of stress. We don't find him pressing for a particular form of faith, worship or ceremonial, nor for a mode of life. He never censured the householder's life as incapable of Divine *denouement*. He promised the crown of life's great consummation for one and all. Where then was his emphasis? On the Life Divine, on a life of divine intoxica-

tion. In other words, he lived and taught 'to abandon the struggle for private creaturely happiness, to expel all eagerness of temporary desire, but instead, to burn with passion for eternal things', for the supreme Good. This is the religion of emancipation that Sri Ramakrishna lived and taught, the freeman's faith, the religion for the scientific man. If this scientific age is not inspired by this religion, then where will it turn for the solace it is hungry for?

Too long has this science-struck generation of ours wasted its time and taste in the antechambers and the outer-temples of Reality, taken up, as it were, by the glamorous trinkets that are on show. Now it should enter the inner sanctum. Or will it still mistake the parlour for the inner apartments, the manifestation for Reality and continue to think that its business is *to make* and not *to be*, to teach and not to live? Then this unbalanced intellectuality would be the result. If only the present age would grow wiser not to waste its intellectuality on the study of the manifestation, but learn to love the Reality and to live in it! And to that end, let it not miss the heritage of our Great Master, Sri Ramakrishna, let it not miss to consecrate his hallowed memory this day—Sukla Dvitiya of Phalgun month (which falls on the 8th of March) on which day hundred and seven years ago he came to us and called us all to the kingly banquet of Immortality.

## MORAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIETY

*By Manu Subedar, M.L.A. (Central), B.A., B.Sc. (Econ.) London,  
Barrister-at-Law.*

In an age of militarism every one's attention is artificially drawn towards issues that are going to be decided by force. Preparations for war loom large. Everything takes a secondary place. Naked force appears to be the only factor, which determines life. In a struggle as wide as the world war now going on, it would appear as if the future of the whole human race hangs on the adroit use of weapons. Superior violence is what everybody is trying to achieve.

It is, therefore, necessary to emphasise the moral foundations of human life. It is necessary to proclaim once more what the great moral teachers of mankind have done, viz. the importance of righteousness and the Brotherhood of Man. Both sides in this war are claiming that they will organize the world for a better life hereafter. The Nazi and Japanese claims are clearly bringing out the race arrogance, in which slavery of others is implicit. Even on the side of the Allies, many expect a survival of imperialism with a gradation of race, putting the Anglo-Saxons at the top, and with a varying degree of freedom, which is the same way of saying as a varying degree of slavery for others. Democracy is a very real feeling with the Americans and they have undoubtedly expressed themselves in no uncertain terms, and yet the Atlantic Charter is limited in geography and in ethnology. Democracy does not necessarily mean equality, and equality does not necessarily mean freedom either economic or political for the rest of humanity.

There is a fringe of high-souled individuals in every country, including the United Kingdom, who are impatient now and who desire the war aims and, in particular, the position with regard to coloured races, inferior peoples, colonies and empires, to be clearly stated. Amongst such coloured races and peoples of colonies and empires, there never was in the history of the world a time when they had been shaken up as much as by the war. With them it naturally intensifies the desire for freedom and for being able to run their own affairs without let or hindrance, without interference and without that idolatry of superior force and superior equipment, which absorbs the activities of every administration in the world today.

The law of the jungle is not applied to ordinary life. We provide protection for the very young and the very old, who could not exist by themselves. We support those, who, on account of sex, age or physical disability, are unable to help themselves. We advocate insurance for illness and unemployment even of the able-bodied men. When there are floods or earthquake, our heart goes out to those who suffer. Every class, which has had a disadvantage in collective bargaining, such as field workers, shop assistants, employees and workmen, is helped individually by good men and collectively by every state, which has got legislative provisions for safeguarding these people. We are already too familiar with the cry of safeguards for the minorities. Even prostitutes and prisoners convicted for felonious offences deserve and receive the

attention and sympathy both of the state and of all right-thinking men. In short, life is not based on grab, or on taking away from a party, who is momentarily weak, something or all that he has got. Life is based on humane considerations. The instinct and practice of charity has received in all faiths an absolutely first place. We have so many societies, including the societies for the protection of children and prevention of cruelty to animals. We have many other organizations, in which literally thousands of men and women engage themselves in social work and in public welfare. It is the essence of organized human existence to check those animal instincts of force and violence and to the extent to which a community succeeds in the task of checking these instincts, it finds a place in the gradation of civilisation.

With all these indisputable and numerous truisms, that society should be run and is in practice run, not on the principle of force, but on the basis of just and reciprocal arrangement, how do we explain the chaos in the international field, which is now leading to the negation of all that is best in civilisation. Force, as a means of determining what is right is obviously wrong. Those, whose cause is just, may not have the necessary strength and may be overwhelmed. This has been seen frequently in history. But diplomats and politicians, money grabbing capitalists and the whole paraphernalia of modern life based on private enterprise, have so far ignored and suppressed the lesson of history as to make it appear that they could run the world on a nice balancing of plot and intrigue. Every machinery, which was calculated to suppress or minimise the use of international force, was discredited by its

being abused in order to advance imperialistic considerations. Had the League of Nations in 1931, when Japan made an aggression on China first, been properly supported, as U. S. A. wanted, by the United Kingdom, who was overwhelmed with considerations of immediate advantage, instead of more stable conditions, the present trouble would not have arisen.

It is the example of a successful aggression, first on the part of the United Kingdom in building up an empire everywhere, and later on the part of Japan, which inflamed Germany to enforce in Europe the same law of the jungle and the law of grabbing, on which European empire in five continents had been built up. No peoples in the world would lose an inch of their greatness, if they acknowledged past errors, and yet even in the fourth year of the war there appears to be no tendency for such public acknowledgement and for setting right those things, which could be set right here and now. This is a matter of disappointment for all those right-thinking men and women throughout the world, no matter to which country they belong, who desire in international matters to see the same dominance of moral considerations as they see it in the organization of life with its units such as families, cities and countries. It is not nationhood which is the highest expression of human aspiration. It is brotherhood and humanity, which takes that place. With this key, human life can be run on a just basis. If all the effort, that is made today for malevolent purposes of destruction, were used for ameliorative objects, what could the human race not achieve ?

There are many, who dislike discussions of this kind, because they are more concerned with the immediate outcome of what is going on in the world. The writer is more concerned with the permanent outcome as far as it affects the human race. He calls upon and urges upon all right-thinking men and women to dwell on these considerations. Those, who are living now, have inherited much from their ancestors and it is their duty, when they pass away after a few years more of life which God will give them, to see that the heritage, which is left to the future, is a clean and sound heritage, in which violence and force have no room; in which they stand condemned in the field of internationalism as much as they do stand condemned today in the field of private citizenship inside a state.

From still another point of view and putting this matter in other words, it comes to this that it is desirable to seek the greatest good of the greatest number, that restraint is a more useful quality of human life than licence, that the momentary suppression of the opportunism of some individuals may give lasting benefits to the human race as a whole, and that what the world today needs is tolerance and amity. There is a chain of rivalry and enmity based largely on greed and wrong tradition, which must be broken. Ideas of revenge must be condemned, and bridges must be thrown across the gulfs between any human group and any other human group, whether small or large. The guilty ones fear

the rise of those who will ask for revenge. The weak fear aggression, and the strong exploiters are afraid that sometime or the other, they will not have the continuance of the opportunities for robbing, which they had in the past. Politicians are indulging in propaganda in order to achieve the immediate purpose, which is before them. But the lovers of humanity and those who are not interested in the immediate issues, but in the permanent issues affecting mankind, must exert themselves for proclaiming the suzerainty of moral concepts and for strengthening the moral foundations of life. It is necessary to put an end to aggression everywhere in whatever garb it appears. It is wrong to ascribe to any one country, nation or race, all the bad qualities, and equally wrong to ascribe to any one country, nation or race, all the good qualities, but it is the good qualities, wherever they exist, in which there is hope of human betterment. To be a good citizen is not enough. It is necessary for every one to be a good man. Such a good man in every country must then try to influence the life of that country towards the common goal. That common goal is one, which has been preached by every prophet that the world has seen. None of them offers salvation to some and denies it to others. Any rearrangement of the world, which does not involve complete equality, full freedom and common sharing, will fall short of that high idea.

# THE GITA THEORY OF ACTION: A STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF HORMIC PSYCHOLOGY.

By Prof. P. S. Naidu, M.A., & R. Mahadevan, B.A. (Hons).

## II

Let us come to Lord Krishna's theory of action. We have seen how the power of Prakriti has been recognised. Let us see whether we should let Prakriti exercise its power.

The will of man seems to be determined by past nature, heredity, training and environment. The whole world seems to converge in the nature of the individual.

'Even a wise man acts in accordance with his own nature; beings follow nature: what can restraint do?'

Yet 'Gita recognises the soul superior to the mechanically determined will'. What is the nature of this soul?

An eternal portion of Myself having become a living soul in the world of life, draws (to itself) the five senses with mind for the sixth abiding in Prakriti. Thus the Supreme one prevailing spirit as manifested is the Jiva. When He presides over the senses, He experiences objects. He is united with the *gunas* and so the ignorant do not know Him. Only the Yogis who strive for it find Him in themselves.

This individual soul is eternal, affected by nothing. It is deathless. The body which it occupies has a beginning and is of the nature of Prakriti. One should realize the truth of this eternal soul and only then can he rise above the normal life and be free from the clutches of Prakriti and *gunas*. To know the reality of soul and incidentally its identity with the Supreme Spirit, Lord Krishna teaches the Karma Yoga as a means.

'In the beginning of creation, O Sinless one, the two-fold path of devotion was given by Me to this world—the path of knowledge for the

meditative and the path of work for the active.'

*One cannot rest from work. He should be always working.* 'Do thou perform obligatory action; for action is superior to inaction, and even the bare maintenance of thy body would not be possible if thou art inactive.'

Actions are divided into four kinds.

1. *Nitya*, viz., obligatory actions like those which produce no merit if done, but produce evil if left undone. Example, Sandhya for a Brahmin.

2. *Naimittika*—those arising on the occurrence of some special events, e.g. birth of a son; they are also customary.

3. *Kamya*—Those intended for securing some special ends. (Optional)

4. *Nishiddha*—Forbidden actions. Chapter III, verses 9 to 15 tell us how Yagna is necessary and how it arises out of sacrificial actions. They also tell us how the world is sustained by such actions.

But in the same chapter in verse 19 he says, 'Therefore, do thou always perform actions which are obligatory, *without attachment*; by performing action without attachment, one attains to the highest. Again in sloka 47 chapter 11 He tells us: 'Thy right is to work only; but never to the fruits thereof. Be thou not the producer of the fruits of (thy) actions; neither let thy attachment be towards inaction.'

Herein lies the crux of the problem. How is it possible to be without attachment and how to renounce the fruits of our action? 'Possession may be, as it is said, nine points of the

law, but is certainly ninety-nine points of human nature.' This would mean desireless action, which is impossible, since every action conscious and unconscious is born of some desire whether vague or explicit.

How is this difficulty overcome? Lord Krishna urges us to cultivate a spiritual angle of vision to purify ourselves and surrender ourselves at His feet to realise our own selves. We should keep a constant watch over our senses and restrain them.

'It is desire—it is anger, born of the Rajo-guna: of great craving, and of great sin: know this as the foe here (in this world).'

This desire is the outcome of the *Gunas* and they abide in our senses. We should, therefore control our senses. We can kill this desire by knowing Him. Now we are faced with three contradictions.

1. We should be ceaselessly acting.

2. There is Prakriti and its *gunas* which are all-powerful to a certain extent.

3. We should be desireless.

Before considering Gita's answer to these, let us see what McDougall says. He recognises four levels of conduct.

1. The stage of instinctive behaviour modified only by the influence of the pains and pleasures that are incidentally experienced in the course of instinctive activities.

2. The stage in which the operation of the instinctive impulses is modified by the influence of rewards and punishments administered more or less systematically by the social environment.

3. The stage in which conduct is controlled in the main by the anticipation of social praise and blame

4. The highest stage, in which conduct is regulated by an ideal of conduct that enables a man to act in the way that seems to him right regardless of the praise or blame of his immediate social environment.<sup>8</sup>

This last approaches Gita's desireless action. Further, commenting on the saying of Thomas A Kempis:

'Forsake all and thou shalt find all. Leave desire and thou shalt find rest. Unless a man be disengaged from the affections of all creatures he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things.' McDougall writes:

It's injunction 'leave desire' is an exhortation to make one desire and one purpose dominant over all others, if possible to the point of their exclusion or extinction; namely the desire for self-perfection. It will be found that all systems of moral cultivation which leave a man a responsible moral being necessarily are alike in that respect. The only alternative is a system of discipline which gives an authoritative ruling for every situation, and thus deprives its followers of all moral responsibility save that of obedience alone.<sup>9</sup>

And again Professor McDougall tells us :

Each of us can at least fight in his own person against this triviality of the modern age. He can find some one distant goal that seems worth striving for with steady purpose. He can note his progress and repair his errors and omissions. He can seek to make himself efficient and expert along that line. He can subordinate to this purpose all trivial seductions. With this in view, let him adopt the practice of being alone for sometimes, in order that he may commune with himself.<sup>10</sup>

Coming back to the Gita, to ensure desireless action, what system of discipline which gives an authoritative ruling, for every situation is given, by Sri Krishna is now to be considered. The whole discourse arises out of a

<sup>8 & 9</sup> McDougall. *Character and Conduct of Life.* p. 116.

<sup>10</sup> McDougall's *Character and the Conduct of Life.* p. 170.

particular situation. Arjuna, a great warrior is to fight his cousins who misbehave. On the battle-field, at the prospect of the impending scourge of his own blood relations and friends, his heart fails him. The problem here is, in the words of Sri Aurobindo Ghose,

It (Gita) sets out with an ethical problem raised by a conflict in which we have on one side the dharma of the man of action, a prince and warrior and leader of men, the protagonist of a great crisis, of a struggle on the physical plane, the plane of actual life, between the powers of right and justice and the powers of wrong and injustice, the demand of destiny of the race upon him that he shall resist and give battle and establish even though through a terrible physical struggle and a giant slaughter a new era and reign of truth and right and justice, and on the other side the ethical sense which condemns the means and the action as a sin, recoils from the price of individual suffering and social strife, unsettling and disturbance and regards abstention from violence and battle as the only way and the one right moral attitude.<sup>11</sup>

Lord Krishna offers an excellent solution,

So let the Shastra be thy authority in ascertaining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having known what is said in the ordinances of the Shastras, thou shouldst act here (in this world).

Having given the authority, He again says 'Looking at thine own Dharma, also, thou oughtest not to waver, for there is nothing higher for a Kshatriya than a righteous war.' (Ch. 11 verso 31)

And this war which Arjuna is to wage is a righteous one, since it is unsought for.

'Fortunate certainly are the Kshatriyas, O son of Pritha, who are called to fight in such a battle, that comes unsought as an open Gate to heaven.'

So, Swadharma is the right guide which one should follow, and the Vedas say 'if ye do the Dhama, ye

shall know the Truth. Dharma, as Professor Wadia translates it, may be taken as 'the law of being' or that which makes a thing or being what it is.

'Dharma is not what the conscience of the individual imposes, nor what the law enforces, but it is something which the common convictions of the people and the spirit of the age persuade one is the right thing to do. The concept therefore, is really cosmic and universal.'<sup>12</sup>

The term Dharma stands for all those ideals and purposes, influences and institutions that shape the character of man both as an individual and as a member of society.

This Dharma is as inexorable as the Dharma of fire is to burn. The Dharma of a Kshatriya is to fight and his desisting from doing it is a crime. Arjuna as a Kshatriya must fight for a righteous cause. Why is Arjuna a Kshatriya.

The Lord says 'The fourfold caste was created by Me, by the differentiation of Guna and Karma'.

All men are not of the same nature. According to Professor McDougall, though the fourteen instincts are present in all, there is vast difference in the degree of intensity of these conative tendencies, in different persons, according to their heredity, early environment and training. And the inherent impulse also differs much in intensity in different persons. So it is quite possible to class people according to the forces of their conative impulses. The ancient caste system was thus based upon individual variations in their capacity in particular branches and this was done to facilitate the blossoming of the inherent capacities without hindrance. This was intended to further the progress of humanity. It would not be out of place here to hear

<sup>11</sup> Essays on the Gita : 2nd series p. 453.

<sup>12</sup> Wadia. Message of Krishna. p. 18.

what Nietzsche says: 'Only by the order of castes, the order of rank, is the supreme law of life promulgated'.

And so Arjuna being of the fighting caste must fight for; it is his duty. He refuses to fight, gives out reasons which smack of much sophistry. He deludes himself and thinks he talks ethics and altruism, while as a matter of fact he shrinks from his duty. He concerns himself only with the immediate future and talks of crime and sin. He is swayed by his emotions and they mar and distort his moral perspective. We can well imagine the Lord's indulgent, ironical smile when he tells, 'Arjuna, verily you talk words of wisdom, but the truly wise grieve neither for the living nor the dead'. (Chapter I Sloka 11.)

Now the Lord soars into the philosophical heights, gradually lifting Arjuna from the depths of Prakriti-ridden misery to the highest Bliss. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, the pranks of ignorance, etc. need not be repeated here. Let us see what means the Lord suggests for performing desireless action; for action we must do. Inaction is impossible and even if possible is unworthy of man. Be always acting but renounce all actions in Him, with mind centred on the self getting rid of hope and selfishness (fight) free from (mental) fever. Never attach yourselves to the immediate effects of actions, have Shraddha and with your mind always centred on Him you will be rid of desires.

One's own Dharma is better though done imperfectly, than the well-performed another man's duty. It is better to die in doing one's own Dharma; since another man's Dharma is fraught with fear. (Ch. III verse 35)

By doing one's own duty one looses his desires. Here Arjuna by fighting,

having his mind only on his duty as a Kshatriya, becomes free of the emotions which sway his moral perspective.

'Whatever work a man does, if done according to the law of his being, the truth of his nature, can be turned Godwards and made an effective means of spiritual liberation and perfection.' <sup>13</sup> The individual soul, the 'Jiva is in self-expression a portion of the Purnashottama'. This Jiva is the spirit and is not the natural ego and this is our reality and inner soul principle. The highest power and the Maya and the three gunas are in the Jiva. But the latter are not the real powers, they are only the 'present executive energy, an apparatus of lower convenience, a scheme of outward exercise and practice'. By rising above the power of this nature of the Prakriti one should realise his self. That is possible by acting according to one's Swadharma.

'From whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom is all this pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty, a man attains perfection.'

That Supreme spirit to whom we should surrender all our actions is described, by the Lord Himself as follows,

'Though I am unborn, of Changeless nature and Lord of beings, yet subjugating My Prakriti, I come into being by my own Maya.'

Unaware of my higher state as the Lord of beings, fools disregard Me, dwelling in the human form.

For I am the Abode of Brahman, the immortal, and immutable, of everlasting Dharma and of Absolute Bliss.

I am the Self, O Gudakesa, existent in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of all beings.

Beyond Me, O Dhananjaya, there is naught. All this is strung in Me, as a row of jewels on a thread'.

<sup>13</sup> Sri Aurobindo : *Essays on the Gita* p. 382.

**S**uch is the Universal Spirit, and man is the manifestation of that Spirit, bound by his past Karma, and deluded by Prakriti and its *gunas*. To rise above this, the path of wisdom is taught in Gita.

A man should uplift himself by his own self, so let him not weaken this self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself.

The Yogi who wants to rise above this mundane sphere should acquire concentration by practising the eight ways. The way to acquire these is set forth in Chapter VI verses 11-26. For one who has risen above the ordinary course of life, desireless action is possible. But this never means that there is no desire. That would be against the nature of man. When Arjuna asks Him what is that which, as if by force compels one to sin, the Lord replies : It is desire--it is anger, born of the Rajoguna ; of great craving and of great sin; know this as the foe here.

It is admitted that there cannot be any desireless action. We can sublimate desires. Scorning all desires of the lower level one should rise above and concentrate his powers on the one all-goal ; viz. to realise the self.

The sensos are said to be superior (to the body) the mind is superior to the senses ; the intellect is superior to the mind ; and that which is superior to the intellect is He (Atman). Thus, knowing Him who is the superior of the intellect, and restraining the self by the self destroy, O mighty-armed, that enemy, the unseizable foe, of desire.

#### How is this done ?

' Fill thy mind with Me, be My devotee, sacrifice unto Me, bow down to Me ; thus having made thy heart steadfast in Me, taking Me as the Supreme goal, thou shalt come to me.'

If one is so whole-heartedly devoted to Him, he cares not for the immediate results of his actions. He does the action at the dictate of his Swa-

dharma, but he is only concerned with the Supreme Goal. The object of his desire has changed, and so he does not care for the intermediary opposites of qualities. If he sacrifices his actions at the feet of the Highest, he comes one with Him. Then he can live in oneness with God and his True self, and being perfected, becomes a faultless instrument of living action in the freedom of the immortal Dharma.

Now the aspirant gets an *asakta buddhi* towards everything. We can now understand the Gita doctrine of non-attachment and renunciation. Renunciation here means, renunciation of the fruits of our action, for we can never renounce our actions. The fruits of our actions are now worthless since our goal has been fixed at a higher level, that of realizing Him. Here one is taught renunciation IN action rather than renunciation OR action.

He who does actions forsaking attachment, resigning them to Brahman, is not soiled by evil, like unto a lotus leaf by water.

The process is Brahman, the clarified butter is Brahman, in the fire of Brahman offered by Brahman by seeing Brahman in action, he reaches Brahman alone.

When a man, completely castes away,\* O Partha, all the desires of mind satisfied in the self alone by the self, then is he said to be one of steady wisdom.

He who maketh Brahman alone as the object of his works obtains Brahman, when such a goal is in view, is it impossible to forsake the fruits of action ? To one who is always striving to attain That, is non-attachment a difficulty ? Never, when the conative tendencies have been directed toward another channel, the motive power exhausts itself in that Supreme Goal and it has nothing to do with the baser ends of desires. With the one a master-desire, that of attaining Brahman will it not be

possible to do, 'that which is like poison at first, but like nectar at the end'?

The recognition of the worthlessness of our outward nature, that is only a passive instrument, is made possible by the True knowledge. Bhakti, Shraddha and self-surrender at the feet of the God-head will give you true knowledge. For has He not said: 'To them, ever steadfast and serving Me with affection, I give the Buddhi-Yoga by which they come unto Me'.

This upward transference of our centre of being and the consequent transformation of our whole existence and consciousness, with a resultant change in the whole spirit and motive of our action, the action often remaining precisely the same in all its outward appearances, makes the gist of the Gita's Karmayoga.<sup>14</sup>

The Lord persistently exhorts us to rise from the lower physical realm to that of a higher spiritual realm. Only then can we get equanimity and non-attachment.

'Just as an artist must often stand back from his work to get a true perspective and the right proportions, so must a man detach himself from worldly possessions and family ties, and look at them all from a point little removed from and outside of himself if he wishes to have that spiritual discernment which sees things and beings in their true perspective and right proportions without passion, prejudices, and self-interest. Consequently, the spirit of detachment, rightly understood, creates energy and enthusiasm for one's association and allotted work in life and at the same time preserves to one that freedom of the soul which refuses to become the victim of one's life's work and attachments.'<sup>15</sup>

Again, Radhakrishnan says, 'we should not do our duty with the motive of purchasing shares in the

other world or opening a bank account with God'.

Reverting to Hormic psychology as propounded by McDougall we find a similar theory of action.

'For the essence of moral conduct is the performance of social duty, the duty prescribed by society, as opposed to the mere following of the promptings of egoistic impulses.'<sup>16</sup> This from McDougall, suggests the doctrine of Swadharma. Human conduct, is the behaviour of self-conscious and rational beings, it is the highest type of behaviour and we have seen the characteristic of behaviour at the beginning.

The following passage from McDougall shows us how we can have actions, whose immediate results may be ignored.

The conations, the desires and aversions arising within this self-regarding sentiment are the motivo forces which, adding themselves to the weaker ideal motivo in the case of moral effort, enable it to win the mastery over some stronger, coarser desire of our primitive animal nature and to banish from consciousness the idea of the end of this desire.<sup>17</sup>

McDougall is not interested in the metaphysical aspect of the self as much as he is interested in the psychological aspect of it. Herein he tells us the necessity for self-perfection.

The habit of self-criticism is required and this implies and arises from, a strong self-regarding sentiment. The special moral sentiments must be brought into connection with, and organised within, the system of a more comprehensive sentiment what may be called the master sentiment among all the moral sentiments, namely, the sentiment for a perfected or completely moral life.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Sri Aurobindo : *Essays on the Gita* 1st series.

<sup>15</sup> Wadia : *Message of Krishna*.

<sup>16</sup> McDougall : *Social Psychology*, p. 313.

<sup>17</sup> McDougall : *Social Psychology*, p. 248.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid P. 226.

Self-knowledge is the best and surest way to the understanding of others; and to each of us it is indispensable for the guidance of his own little bark through the troubled waters of modern life.<sup>19</sup>

Regarding God, McDougall writes : ‘.....nothing is more miserable than the state of that man whose character, having been integrated by the religious sentiment, collapses through the destruction of the belief in God’.

Further when asked the question what master sentiment can we cultivate whose object cannot be destroyed so long as life endures and whose desires will govern conduct to noble ends alone and never lead us to lasting unhappiness, McDougall answers, ‘It is possible by cultivating the one sentiment of self-regard from which arises the purpose of attaining to nobility of character. He whose character has developed along this line can say,

In the fell clutch of circumstance,  
I have not winceed nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbound.  
It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments  
the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the captain of my soul.<sup>20</sup>  
About the way to attain detachment

McDougall has something to say:

Any intellectual contemplation of our emotions detaches us in some degree from them, weakens their power over us; even if it be merely the contemplation of scientific curiosity. Then talking about that ‘noblest invention of nature’ the parental instinct, McDougall cites

it as a case of disinterested protective impulse.

If we give a richer connotation to McDougall’s advice to young men, we hear the Lord’s voice, though faintly, for he says.

‘Make a plan of life and pursue it steadily; but be flexible in your means, though inflexible in your main purpose. Remember that joy is in the pursuit, rather than in the attainment of your goals; therefore set them high, lest you attain them too easily.

“The worldly hope men set their Hearts upon

Turn Ashes—or it prospers and anon,  
Like snow upon the Desert’s dusty face,

Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone.”<sup>21</sup>

‘Lord Hari, out of mercy, has made a boat of the *Bhagavadgita*, so that His devotees may steer clear of the vast ocean of the world.’ The teachings of the Gita are all-comprehensive and it is acknowledged to be the work of a Divine author. But McDougall has only given a psychological theory and this is not even new. The germs of his theory can be seen faintly even in the teachings of Aristotle. So, let us take McDougall’s theory, and see whether he has or has not evolved a theory of action which is in conformity with the Gita ideal especially its ideal of desireless action. Here it is presumed, that an attempt has been made towards such an examination. It is also presumed that a fair attempt has been made to show that the Hormic theory of action is in conformity with the Gita theory of action.

<sup>19</sup> McDougall : *Character and Conduct of Life*. p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> McDougall : *ibid* p. 114.

<sup>21</sup> McDougall : *ibid* p. 213.

## CAUSALITY AND CONTINUITY

By Kapileswar Das, M.A., B.Ed.

From time immemorial both in the East and the West the quest of philosophy has ever proceeded in the direction of two fundamental factors, those of causality and continuity. Human mind is so constituted that it does not stop with sense-perception, does not find its fulfilment in a mere animalic living. It is gifted with intelligence along with the faculties of discrimination and retrospection. Man does not find the full meaning of his life as a particular unit vegetating for a short time in a particular locality ; this life is not all for him. He finds himself an individual self with a cosmic history on the background ; the belief in pre-existence is inherent in him, primarily and secondarily. Again, as an individual self he finds himself in an infinity of relations with an infinite number of other individual selves, every one of which has such a history as his own. Naturally he seeks to know the cause of such cosmic process. He seeks to know the cause of every thing or event that falls to his lot, then the cause of it, and so on until he reaches the primal cause, knows the one by which everything is known, until the final solution of all his problems is within his grasp. But is this possible ? Is it not a mere idealistic hankering ? It may be so ; the final solution may not be practically within the reach of one and all. But all the same the very consciousness of such a quest enlightens man's life, makes it significant, preserves its worth and sums up all its values. Again causality involves continuity. The cause and its effect are continuous, are related to each other and form links in the

same chain. Is experience continuous or discontinuous is another eternal question of man. Just as man does not stop with sense-perception, so does he not unquestionably accept the discrete manifold derived through it. Separation, isolation, rupture, these are not in his true nature ; they do not satisfy him ultimately. He seeks to find the underlying unity of all this diversity of which he is. Philosophers have thus dealt with these two questions of immense theoretical and practical interest from different view-points, one trying to correct and supplement the findings of the other. Truth is many-sided, though it is one and called by various names. It is interesting to follow this quest of theirs, of which a brief attempt is made in the following paragraphs. It shows how it brings within its scope the whole range of human thought and action.

### II

Charvak, in consonance with his materialistic and commonplace view of life, says that causality itself is an induction involving circular reasoning. Universal propositions cannot be established by limited perceptions. Every inference is based on an unconditional concomitance which must itself be inferred. There is thus *regressus ad infinitum*. The nexus between cause and effect was only a notion based on former perception which by accident is found justified by the result of a number of cases. The step which the mind takes from the knowledge of smoke to the knowledge of fire can be accounted for by its being based on a former perception or by its being an error ; and that in

some cases it is justified by the result is accidental just like the coincidence of effects observed in the employment of gems, charms, drugs, etc. The various phenomena of the world can all be produced spontaneously from the inherent nature of things. Thus it has been said, 'The fire is hot, the water cold, refreshing cool the breeze of morn ; by whom came this variety? From their nature was it born'.

The Buddhists assume causality as an *a priori* principle. Invariable concomitance is easily cognisable by means of identity and causality. It results from the relation of cause and effect, or from identity as a determinant, apart from the mere observation of the desired result in similar cases, or the non-observation of it in dissimilar ones. Causal efficiency is the essence of empirical reality. The correspondence between the rational and practical activity of the self, the truth of perception, ensures that there is no phenomenon without cause. If things could happen without cause, all motives to action would be baffled. Such a supposition as that an effect may be produced without any cause would destroy itself by putting a stop to activity of any kind. Such doubts alone are to be entertained, the entertainment of which does not implicate us in practical absurdity or the like. That the fire and smoke, for instance, stand in the relation of cause and effect is ascertained by five indications, *viz.*, that an effect is not cognised prior to its effectuation, that the cause being perceived the effect is perceived, and that after the effect is cognised there is its non-cognition, when the cause is no longer cognised. But this correct stand so far as causality is concerned of the Buddhist school falls short of ultimate truth in the context of its view of reality, *viz.*, that all is

momentary, void and painful. Its doctrine of perpetual flux and constant mutations virtually turns the causal relation into a theory of the existent being produced from the non-existent. Metaphysically such an opinion is untenable. That which is itself non-existent and unsubstantial can never be a cause any more than the hare's horn. Again, the real and the unreal can never be identical.

Nyaya says cause and effect are two distinguishable conditions of things in a relation of antecedence and consequence. Its doctrine is absolute non-existence of the produced before its actual production. It denies a nexus in the form of super-sensuous power. Such power is neither a matter of observation, nor legitimate hypothesis. A cause is the invariable, unconditional, immediately antecedent sum of operative conditions and the effect is the consequent phenomena which results from the joint operation. Causes take place through kinetic operation in the nature of molar or molecular motion. It affirms the power of God in His creation of the universe out of the pre-existing realities. The world is absolutely new creation. It affirms the existence of metaphysical conditions like *Dharma* and *Adharma* constituting a system of moral ends fulfilling in and through the mechanical system and order of Nature. It affirms conjunction of substances with their properties and relations. Matter is not moved by any inherent energy, but by another independent force, *viz.*, *Kala*. Motion is communicated. All this makes the Nayayika hold to the proposition that the as yet non-existent is produced from the existent. Its defect is obvious. That which previous to the operation of the originating cause was as non-existent

as a hare's horn can never be produced, i.e., become connected with existence.

The more tenable position would be that the effect is existent even previous to the operation of the cause, which only produces the manifestation of this already existent thing just like the manifestation of the oil in sesame seed by pressing or of the milk in cows by milking. This is the standpoint of the Sankhya. The Sankhyas hold that the existent is produced from the existent; the cause and effect are identical. It follows that the effect does not exist different from the cause. When it comes forth and is revealed, it is said to be produced; when it retires and is concealed, it is said to be destroyed. Everything is not by every means possible; what is capable does that to which it is competent; and like is produced from like. But how is this production possible? In the Upanishadic language, the one Unborn (Purusha) for his enjoyment approaches the one Unborn (Prakriti), and this is made possible. Nature is inherently active; the cause of its movement is not to be sought outside itself. Unintelligent Nature acts for itself just as the unintelligent milk acts for the growth of the calf or the unintelligent rain acts for the welfare of living creatures; no intelligent superintendent is required. At the same time Sankhya introduces the notion of efficiency which is attributed to Purusha. Briefly, its relation of cause and effect is one of identity and metaphysical efficiency. But if the Purusha, as Sankhya holds, is pure and perfect, wherefrom does its seeking of enjoyment come? Again, the dichotomy of two independent eternal realities running parallel throughout and yet influencing each

other waits for further explanation.

In meeting it Vedanta asserts that efficient and material causes are aspects of one Reality. But from the absolute standpoint it says there is no causation at all, the notion having empirical validity only. All effects are an illusory emanation from the existent and not themselves really existent. But in accepting this, practical difficulties stand in our way. Firstly, there is the *prima facie* belief that the external world is real. Again, if the pure intelligent Brahman is the cause of the unintelligent creation, the subject and the attributed nature become so dissimilar. An effect which is composed of happiness, misery and stupidity must imply a cause similarly composed. Will it not be more true to say that all things being composed of pleasure, pain and indifference must have as their cause Nature, which consists of the qualities of activity, goodness and darkness (or, in the Upanishadic language which is red, white and black) and produces a similar and manifold offspring? In answering all these points Vedanta cognises two orders of reality, the conventional (*Vyavaharika*) and the transcendental (*Paramarthika*), though of course it makes for ultimate sublation of the former in the dazzling lustre of the latter.

Turning to the pages of European philosophy, we see the question dealt with thoroughness. David Hume takes it up in right earnest. According to him we apprehend no efficiency in the causal order, but only a certain regularity of sequence which contains no absolute guarantee of permanence. We do not reach a knowledge of this relation by reasonings *a priori*. The effect is totally different from the cause and can never be discovered in

it. There is no necessary connection, no tie between them, the one does not necessarily imply the other, and is not productive of the other. Our knowledge of their relation is based on observation and experience. Having found in many instances that any two kinds of objects have always conjoined, we infer that the objects are causally related. The mind is carried by habit or custom to believe that the two objects in question will always go together. This belief is an operation of the soul, a species of natural instinct or mechanical tendency. But Hume seems to be uncertain as to the psychology of this belief. Comparatively speaking this view does not go far higher than Charvak's. Kant refutes this skepticism or agnosticism in the world of experience, though as regards the noumenal or things-in-themselves he is discreetly silent. In the spatio-temporal schema intellect considers the real as something upon which something else invariably follows; this is its way of making perceptible the category of causality. In the phenomenal series no breach is possible in the causal nexus. It is our business to go right on in the chain *ad infinitum*. But in the sense-world we will never find a free cause. At the same time the categorical imperative, the conception of moral and practical freedom presupposes the undisputed sway of the transcendental where cause and effect are merged in the spontaneity of free will. Comparatively speaking the Kantian view in this regard may approximate to the Sankhyan dualism. Later on Mills puts his own contribution to the subject. According to him the invariable antecedent is termed the cause; the invariable consequent, the effect. The cause, philosophically speaking, is the sum-total of the

conditions, positive and negative, taken together. In point of certainty causation stands at the head of all observed uniformities, specially that of the course of nature, on which stands his famous warrant of induction. Mill's theory in this respect reminds us of our Nyaya theory to a great extent.

### III

Then to continuity. We will begin with western thinkers. The sensationalist school represented by Hume, Bain and others says that our perceptions can only give us points of sensation or the manifold of experience which is discrete. All we can know is our own impressions. We have no right to assert the reality either of material or spiritual substances. The powers and parts of the mind are distinct. All the materials of our thinking are derived from outward and inward impressions; where there are no impressions there can be no ideas. Our mental life is a series of impressions and ideas which do not present a continuous flow or stream. Though our thoughts or ideas are not entirely loose or unconnected through the play of association of ideas there is no connection of logical necessity between them. The mind is a bundle or collection of different perceptions which succeed one another with an inconceivable rapidity and are in a perpetual flux and movement. It is a kind of theatre where several perceptions successively make their appearance, pass, repass, glide away and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. But there is properly no simplicity in it at any time, nor identity at different times. The idea of continuity in Time, Space and objective causal nexus are mental constructs. Mill accepts this theory, but vacillates in offering an explana-

tion of it that is suggestive of higher truth. He admits that if we speak of mind as a series of feelings we are obliged to answer the question as to how it becomes aware of itself as past and future ; then we are reduced to the alternative of believing that the mind is something different from any series of feelings of which it is aware and which brings continuity to it. Comparatively speaking these views may correspond mostly to our Vaisesika school of thought of Kanada. But briefly the truth of the matter is experience is not, or never begins with atoms or points of sensation and their association. It is always a continuum, a universe which the mind further analyses into sections according to pragmatic necessity. William James approximates more to Reality and his approach is an advance on the subject. He recognises continuity of experience. No doubt within its range he differentiates ' substantive states ' and ' states of transition ', ' Warm and intimate tracts of consciousness and fringe ', but these distinctions are due to distribution of attentive interest, dissociation and analysis. According to him, if we would reach reality we must take experience in its purity and primitive innocence as it exists before it has been manipulated by conceptual thinking. Science patches together fragments of its dead results ; it mutilates reality ; a living understanding of the movement of reality is essential. The immediate experience is a unity in diversity. Our psychic life does not consist of a multiplicity of sensations, nor are the latter combined by categories. But this advanced view also falls short of the Ultimate and the whole in that James seems to think of reality as a mixture of the flux of sensations, their relations and previous truths.

But the basis of their growth and significance in an organic coherence he does not explain clearly. The fact is the sublime heights of Vedanta in this as well as in all other philosophic pursuits appear to be unscalable after all to the analytic and empiric western temperament.

The three fundamental forms of continuity may be mentioned as ontological, i.e. pertaining to reality, apart from and independent of experience ; epistemological i.e. pertaining to experience, either as its basis or as its condition ; and psychological, relating to experience as it is actually felt or intuited.

Applying these standards to our different schools of thought, we see that Nyaya-Vaisesika recognises the first two, but not the last. As regards the first, four of its substances, viz., *akasa*, *kala*, *dik*, and *Atman* are infinitely continuous. Again, according to it the *Atman* is the permanent possibility, the spiritual basis of experience. Thus the second kind of continuity is recognised. But Nyaya has also many limitations to continuity. It cognises more than one infinitely continuous substance as seen above and along with them the independent existence of a chief *Atman*, something like the Arch-monad of Leibnitz. It admits a plurality of individual selves and depends on subjective and objective materials and instruments of perception to have conscious experience. According to it consciousness is a quality of the *Atman*, but not essential to it.

The Sankhya-yoga school recognises psychological continuity also along with the other two. To it the spiritual basis of experience and consciousness are not two, but one. But it still has limitations in that it admits also a plurality of individual

selves and makes Nature independent of consciousness.

Vedanta recognises all the three kinds of continuity fully in Brahman. It is the basis of all our continua,—Time, Space, ether, etc. It is the seamless, partless, indivisible, homogeneous, alogical whole.

Coming down from the realm of abstruse abstract thought to the world of normal practical experience, we can view continuity in extensity and protensity or duration. The individual self gazes outward and the vast illimitable space extends before him ; it seeks to configurate it, map it out, study it in all its contours, contents and proximities, and the result is the formulation of our physical sciences. But it does not offer complete explanation of the riddle of the universe. The objective domain remains dark and unintelligible without being referred to subjective consciousness. The self then turns its gaze inward and attempts to explore the unfathomable depths of the internal stuff in all their ramifications and the result is the development of our mental and moral sciences. These are the bases of physical and mental continuity. Rooted and sustained in

both, assimilating the essence of both, life proceeds in continuous types, in endless variety in its different layers of the mineral, vegetable, animal, human and super-human along the process of evolution with many a reversion and retrogression of living beings in an infinite curve-line on the map of infinite time and space according to the Law of Karma. And, who can doubt that the ennobling, expansive, inspired conception of such a universe working on the emotive side is at the root of all our art, poetry and religion and functioning in the plane of volition is the string of all human achievements. The rhythm of the world is continuous. There is again continuity of object, thought and name. Being the basis of intelligibility, it forms the core of language with all its off-shoots. Life, again, admits two phases of interpretation,—the static and the dynamic, viewed in the light of existence and transformation, being and becoming, of what is and what grows or decays in the flowing, galloping, changing universe ; thus there is continuity of substance and of form. There is also absolute continuity *versus* relative continuity.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Works of reference :—*Sarva Darsana Samgraha : A History of Philosophy* (Thilly); *Power Series* (Sir John Woodroffe & P. N. Mukhopadhyaya), etc.

# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, THE AMBASSADOR OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION<sup>1</sup>

*By Prof. C. Kunhan Raja, M.A., D. Phil (Oxon)*

During a very brief period of nine years, of which barely five years were spent in India, what Swami Vivekananda had accomplished is something stupendous. He was more an ambassador who came to modern India with a message from the Rishis of ancient India, than an ambassador of India to the West. Providence must have had a purpose in that he was first shown to the world in America. The sun rises in the distant horizon and not in our midst. Considering the mentality of the educated Indians of the time, the light shed by Swami Vivekananda might not have been noticed or recognised if he simply lectured from one end of India to the other. He caught the eye of the entire India when he rose first in America.

Swami Vivekananda spoke of religion and philosophy; he referred to the reform movements in India; but he studiously abstained from expressing an opinion on Indian political movements. During all his talks he was making constant references to 'the wisdom of the Rishis'. He deplored the degradation of religion in India and the corruptions that had crept into the social life of the Indians, especially in marriage and in the caste system. But he always advocated the method of improvements and re-adjustments of old institutions to suit the changing times and did not favour cutting away from tradition. If the left shoe is put on the right foot and if the right shoe is put on the left, the

remedy for the consequent inconvenience is not in throwing away the pair of shoes and getting a new one but in putting the proper shoe on the proper foot.

Swami Vivekananda was a sannyasin and he advocated Sannyasa, with consistency and perseverance. But he did not care to have a mere numerical strength for his new 'order'. He wanted the really deserving few to join him as representatives of the great civilization, who could keep up the light of civilization burning. According to him the various civilizations of the world have crumbled when there were not great individuals who could represent and hold up the spirit of that civilization. This is the task which the Rishis of ancient India carried out. They never started a mass movement of Sannyasa enlarging the number of the nominal adherents to the movement. They kept themselves outside the normal currents of life, but ever watched their courses and directed them properly. But in course of time the Hindu civilization also began to decay because there were not individuals who could understand the wisdom of the Rishis and hold up the banner of that civilization.

For millenniums when the Vedic civilization was a living factor, there was political independence, economic prosperity and social concord in the country. A few centuries before the Christian era there were signs of a set-back in this great civilization. Veda Vyasa was the great personality

<sup>1</sup> The substance of an address delivered at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras on the Birthday of Swami Vivekananda.

who rose in India at that time calling upon the nation to defend their great vedic heritage. He was the ambassador of the Vedic civilization to that age. The *Mahabharata* and the Puranas preserve to us the record of the nation-wide movement for the revival of Vedic civilization. All the poets and dramatists of the time drew their inspiration from Vyasa. On account of the revival of the Vedic civilization, with necessary adjustments to suit the changed times, the nation and its civilization were preserved for many more centuries in a position of eminence in the world, when along with religion and philosophy, there was political freedom, economic plenty and social concord, as in the Vedic times. Political conquerors like the Greeks, the Cythians and the Huns were absorbed and assimilated into the civilized national life of India. The high civilization, of which 'Vedic Tradition' was the watch-word, preserved the political and economic freedom of the nation.

Swami Vivekananda must be regarded as the Veda Vyasa for the modern age when there are signs of a clear break from ancient traditions. Vyasa's contribution to the revival of Vedic civilization in ancient India consists of the *Mahabharata* and the Puranas on the one hand and the *Vedanta Sutras* on the other. The whole of this literature must be taken as a harmonious unit, and it was so taken by the great Acharyas. Similarly the message of Swami Vivekananda to modern India, of which the watch-word is 'the wisdom of the Rishis', also consists of his teachings on the various problems of modern Indian life, social, religious, etc., and also his teachings of Vedanta and of Sannyasa. We

have no right to break up his teachings into parts and to select some portion, discarding or ignoring others. Everything he has taught is covered by the watch-word 'the wisdom of the Rishis'. What is very important to modern India is to realise and to recognise the value of this 'wisdom of the Rishis' in our national movements.

We hear so much now-a-days of conflicts of cultures in our national life. But 'conflict of culture' is a contradiction in terms. Cultured men can never have conflicts. Those who have conflicts are not cultured. The conflicts in modern Indian life are due to want of a real culture. The introduction of an element of culture into modern movements is the way to remove these conflicts in our national life. The whole edifice of politics and economics has been built on the foundation of a conflict of interest between individuals and individuals and between communities and communities; that means, it is built on the foundation of an absence of culture from national life. Culture is the only remedy and corrective against this conflict of interest permeating into the entire national life as an incurable disease. But unfortunately there is no aspect of modern national movements in India where culture, which means only the 'wisdom of the Rishis', has any part. The attempts of national leaders seem to be only to change the label, the name, the form; but the essence of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda is that a label, a name or a form does not matter at all; there must be an improvement, there must be a complete change in the inner content, by introducing the essence of 'the wisdom of the Rishis.'

The humiliation in modern Indian life is not merely that foreigners are economically better off and hold superior positions politically, in relation to Indians. The position which our languages and literatures and our ancient culture occupy in our education and in our life is the greatest humiliation for the Indians. No leader of public opinion, either in the field of politics or in the field of religion and social reform have attempted to introduce 'the wisdom of the Rishis' as an integral factor in their movements. They have not relied on 'the wisdom of the Rishis' as an inspiring force that can thrill the whole nation into a new state of activity.

It is one of the most deplorable experiences in a man's life to have to think of the humiliating position which the Indian languages and literatures and the ancient Indian culture occupy in the educational scheme of the country and the degraded position allotted to the teachers of these subjects in the schools and colleges. For this position the responsibility lies mainly on the shoulders of Indians themselves. Educational institutions under the direct control of Indians — nationalists — do not present a happier

picture in comparison with institutions controlled by foreign missionaries and by the government.

It is a matter for wonder why the great student population of India, who could exhibit admirable powers of organisation and self-sacrifice for political causes should be very complacent and forbearing regarding the humiliating position which Indian languages and literatures and ancient Indian culture occupy in their own institutions. It is not possible that the cultural uplift will come as a direct consequence of success in the political field. On the other hand cultural revival is absolutely necessary as an antecedent and preparation for political emancipation and economic regeneration. It is only culture that can give the necessary urge to the nation in their fight for their country and for their country's honour.

This is the great value of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda to the nation. And his message is the message of 'the wisdom of the Rishis'. It is this message which Swami Vivekananda has brought to modern India from the ancient Rishis, at a time when such a message is sorely needed in India.

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

When by the process of time, fallen from the true ideals and rules of conduct, and devoid of the spirit of renunciation, addicted only to blind usages and degraded in intellect, the descendants of the Aryans failed to appreciate even the spirit of the Puranas, etc. which taught men of ordinary intelligence the abstruse truths of the Vedanta in concrete form and diffuse language and appeared antagonistic to one another on the surface, because of each inculcating with special emphasis only particular aspects of the spiritual Ideal,—

And when, as a consequence, they reduced India, the fair land of religion, to a scene of almost infernal confusion by breaking up piecemeal the one Eternal Religion of the Vedas (Sanatana Dharma), the grand synthesis of all the aspects of the Spiritual Ideal, into conflicting sects, and by seeking to sacrifice each other in the flames of sectarian hatred and intolerance,—

Then it was that Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna incarnated himself in India, to demonstrate what the true religion of the Aryan race is ; to show where amidst all its many divisions and off-shoots, scattered over the land in the course of its immemorial history, lies the true unity of the Hindu religion, which by its overwhelming number of sects discordant to superficial view, quarrelling constantly with each other and abounding in customs divergent in every way, has constituted itself a misleading enigma for our countrymen and the butt of contempt for foreigners ; and, above all, to hold up before men, for their lasting welfare, as a living embodiment of the Sanatana Dharma,

his own wonderful life into which he infused the universal spirit and character of this Dharma, so long cast into oblivion by the process of time.

In order to show how the Vedic truths — eternally existent as the instrument with the Creator in His work of creation, preservation and dissolution—reveal themselves spontaneously in the mind of the Rishis purified from all impressions of worldly attachment, and because such verification and confirmation of the scriptural truths will help the revival, reinstatement and spread of religion,—the Lord, though the very embodiment of the Vedas, in this His new incarnation has thoroughly discarded all external forms of learning.

That the Lord incarnates again and again in human form for the protection of the Vedas or the true religion, and of Brahmanahood or the ministry of that religion—is a doctrine well-established in the Puranas, etc.

The waters of a river falling in a cataract acquire greater velocity; the rising wave after a hollow swells higher ; so after every spell of decline the Aryan society recovering from all the evils by the merciful dispensation of Providence, has risen the more glorious and powerful :—such is the testimony of history.

After rising from every fall our revived society is expressing more and more its innate eternal perfection, and so also the omnipresent Lord in each successive incarnation is manifesting Himself more and more.

Again and again has our country fallen into a swoon, as it were, and again and again has India's Lord, by the manifestation of Himself, revivified her.

But greater than the present deep dismal night, now almost over, no pall of darkness had ever before enveloped this holy land of ours. And compared with the depth of this fall, all previous falls appear like little hoof-marks.

Therefore, before the effulgence of this new awakening, the glory of all past revivals in her history will pale like stars before the rising sun, and compared with this mighty manifestation of renewed strength, all the many past epochs of such restoration will be as child's play.

The various constituent ideals of the Religion Eternal, during its present state of decline, have been lying scattered here and there for want of competent men to realise them,—some being preserved partially among small sects and some completely lost.

But strong in the strength of this new spiritual renaissance, men, after reorganising these scattered and disconnected spiritual ideals, will be able to comprehend and practise them in their own lives, and also to recover from oblivion those that are lost. And as the sure pledge of this glorious future, the all-merciful Lord has manifested, as said above, in the present age, an incarnation which in point of completeness in revelation, its synthetic harmonising of all ideals and its promoting of every sphere of spiritual culture, surpasses the manifestations of all past agos.

So at the very dawn of this momentous epoch, the reconciliation of all aspects and ideals of religious thought and worship is being proclaimed; this boundless, all-

embracing idea had been lying inherent, but so long concealed in the Religion Eternal and its scriptures, and now rediscovered, it is being declared to humanity in a trumpet voice.

This new dispensation of the age is the source of great good to the whole world, specially to India; and the inspirer of this dispensation, Sri Bhagavan Ramakrishna, is the reformed and remodelled manifestation of all the past great epoch-makers in religion. O man, have faith in this and lay it to heart.

The dead never return; the past night does not reappear; a spent-up tidal wave does not arise anew; neither does man inhabit the same body over again. So from the worship of the dead past, O man, we invite you to the activities of the present; from the waste of energy in retracing lost and demolished pathways, we call you back to broad new-laid highways lying very near. He that is wise, let him understand.

Of that power which at the very first impulse has roused distant echoes from all the four quarters of the globe, conceive in your mind the manifestation in its fulness; and discarding all idle misgivings, weaknesses and the jealousies characteristic of enslaved peoples, come and help in the turning of this mighty wheel of new dispensation!

With the conviction firmly rooted in your heart that you are the servants of the Lord, His children, helpers in the fulfilment of His purposes, enter the arena of work.

## ACHARYA SANKARA AND MEISTER ECKHART<sup>1</sup>

By Swami Jagadiswarananda

The Sanskrit word 'Acharya' conveys the same meaning as the German word 'Meister'. Acharya and Meister are the titles given to great spiritual teachers in India and Germany respectively. As Sankara is usually regarded as the classic representative of Advaita Vedanta, the acme of Indian metaphysical speculation, so Eckhart is considered the greatest figure in the whole of European medieval mysticism. Sankara and Eckhart were both monks and masters of mysticism. Eckhart was tried for preaching his new doctrine unknown to the Europe of the day and his mysticism was condemned as heresy by the orthodox church. If it was Luther who reformed Christianity on the German soil it was Eckhart who raised mysticism and made it soar to the dizzy heights of Advaita Vedanta.

There is such surprising resemblance nay, identity between the fundamental teachings of the Indian Acharya and German Meister that the words of the one would read like a translation into Latin or German from the sanskrit of the other and *vice versa*. 'In Eckhart and Sankara' remarks Rudolf Otto in his *Mysticism: East and West* (p. 76) we see clearly how types and combinations of

spiritual mysticism, identical or very similar have sprung to life in the Orient and in the Occident. They reveal indeed a spiritual kinship of the human soul which transcends race, climate and environment'. Mysticism which rises from the depths of the human soul and is the essence of religions seems to be identical in all times and climes. It is independent of history and is univeral. Geographical differences have no sway over it. Whether the flower of mysticism blossoms in India, China, Persia or Alexandria, on the Rhine or in the Erfurt, its fragrance is the same everywhere. Whether mysticism is found in the delicate Persian verse of a Jelaluddin Rumi, in the inspiring utterance of Monsur Hallaj, in the beautiful German of a Meister Eckhart, in the teachings of Laotze or Plotinus, or in the laconic riddles of the Sino-Japanese Zen school, its forms could always be exchanged one for the other. For one and the same experience of the spiritual Reality speaks in them in varying dialects. This similarity demonstrates an intimate and inner identity of varieties of religious experience and spiritual life. Truly has the Vedic Rishi sung that the Ultimate Reality is one though sages describe it variously. Sri

<sup>1</sup> Eckhart was born at Strasburg in Germany in 1250 and died in 1327 A.D. in the prison of his Order. Eckhart studied and taught afterwards at Paris. He seems to be the immediate pupil of Albert though he was a staunch follower of Thomas Aquinas. Eckhart was summoned in 1302 by Bonifacius VII. to Rome and was made a doctor. Eckhart held positions of high dignity in his Order. In 1304 he became its provincial for Saxony and in 1307 its general vicar and was commissioned to reform the convents of the Order in Bohemia. He taught and preached in many parts of Germany with the greatest *efficacy*. But for preaching a novel doctrine he was removed from offices and was brought in 1327 before a tribunal of the Inquisition at Cologne. He recanted conditionally and appealed to further requisition to the Pope but died in the prison before the final trial.

Ramakrishna's wonderful life in the modern age is the veritable proof of this universal truth.

The analogy between Sankara and Eckhart is remarkable in many respects. Both the masters present their philosophy by commenting on the ancient sacred scriptures of their respective faiths. Sankara does this by commenting on the Upanishads and the Gita; and Eckhart by expounding the books of the Bible. Both are mystics and scholastics in one and force the old Texts into the service of their own doctrine. Both use highly developed technique as the medium of expression. Exposition of both is abstract, soaring and yet subtle and beyond the ken of ordinary intellect. Both gather up their teaching into one great speculative work. Sankara in his *Bhashya* to the *Brahmasutras* and Eckhart in his *Opus Tripartitum*.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Rudolf Otto observes: 'Neither is a chance phenomenon in his own age. As their respective epochs themselves show striking general similarities, so these two men correspond in the positions which they hold in and toward their own time. Both are to the same extent expressions and focussing points of great and more general tendencies and movements with which their age and environment were filled. Both in a similar fashion have roots in the heritage of past ages and great traditions which they expand and build up anew. Each of them at the same time was both theologian and philosopher and works with all the theological and philosophical conceptions of his day. There are expressions in the writings of Eckhart

which are almost exactly equivalent to some of Sankara. Sentences could be taken almost unchanged from the works of the former which are almost corresponding to some of the latter. Both build up an identical metaphysic which is essentially ontological, using methods which are startlingly alike, and a still more similar terminology. Both are teachers of salvation that is at once transcendental. *Samyag darshan* of Sankara is the same as the *intuitus mysticus* (mystical intuition) of Eckhart. Conceptions of the One, the Many, Life and Salvation, Soul, etc. are so alike that they have been called by a German savant as contemporaries 'in the deeper sense'. For both stand at corresponding points in the parallel developments of their environments.

Let us first compare the conceptions of the two masters about Ultimate Reality. Sankara's Brahman and Iswara correspond respectively to Eckhart's Godhead and God. Like the Vedantic Brahman, Eckhartian Godhead is beyond the three antitheses of knower, knowing and known. As Brahman becomes *saguna* and *sakara* as Ishwar; so out of Godhead comes God. 'God and Godhead are as distinct as heaven and earth. Heaven stands a thousand miles above the earth and so the Godhead is above God. 'God becomes and disappears' says Eckhart. According to Eckhart *Esse est deus i. e.* Being is Godhead. Being is absolute, eternal, nameless and formless. All naming is alien to it. That 'Being is Godhead' means that Godhead is that 'whose essence is existence and which has no essence except this existence

<sup>2</sup> As the English translation of Sankara *Bhasya* on the *Brahma Sutras* by Thibaut and Dr. Kunhan Raja of Madras are available so the authoritative rendering in English of the works of Meister Eckhart which are originally in German and Latin has been made by C. de D. Evans and published by Messrs. Watkins of England.

alone which Being signifies'. Being here is not predicated of Godhead, but Godhead is predicated of Being. As Brahman is beyond thought and words so is Godhead incomprehensible and inexpressible. For this reason every predicate which could be used would veil Godhead and would make It as Eckhart says 'an idol, a not-God, a not-spirit, yea, a sheer nothing'. Both teachers end their speculations with similar warning. 'Wouldest Thou be perfect, do not yelp about God' says Eckhart. 'This Atman is silent' says Sankara. Eckhart asserts from his personal ecstasy that the seer has to pass beyond 'God' into the silent 'void' of the Godhead. That is the highest vision, the final experience, and whosoever still has a 'God' has not yet reached to the highest and the last. 'Had I a God whom I could understand' says Eckhart 'I would no longer hold him for God'. The German synonym used by the sage for 'void' is *wust* which points to the vastness of ultimate mystical experience beyond the disturbance of thought to a silence as of the desert.

As Sankara in the sixth Prapathaka of the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, Section I, puts Sat, Absolute Existence, at the beginning of all things and considers It as the substratum of the cosmic phenomena, similarly Eckhart in his prologue to the *Opus Tripartitum* (p. 535) states that *ipsum esse* (Being itself) is before all things and does not receive anything either from anything or by

anything, neither is it appended to nor does It follow anything but it precedes and is prior to all things. What is other than being is nothing. In the Being, there is no distance at all, absolutely no distinction of form or condition or activity. It is the beginning, the principle and the end of all things. That which is, does not become, nor can it become.' What Sankara calls *astivam* of Brahman, Eckhart calls *Istigkeit* (is-ness). In support of this Eckhart appeals to Exodus (3 : 14) where Lord says 'I am that I am', 'I am' hath sent me. While commenting on this aphorism of Exodus, Eckhart says: 'The pronoun I of the first person by itself signifies unmixed Being, without accidents (*upadhi*), without anything foreign to its nature (*anyad*), substance without quality (*nirguna*) without form without this or that (*neti, neti*). God is much more an 'aught', which is yet (*amurta*), an incomprehensible 'aught'.<sup>3</sup> As Sankara says *saham* (I am He, the Brahman) and none else, so Eckhart says, 'God is the same one as I am. With Him we are one, not only as united but in an absolute at-onement'. In the highest realisation the individual soul is 'dead and buried in God-head (Brahman). The knower and the known are one. Simple people imagine that they should see God as if He stood there and they here. That is not so. God and I are one in knowledge (ecstasy). I am neither God nor creature. I am that which I was and shall remain, now and forever more.'

(To be Continued.)

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<sup>3</sup> This doctrine of Eckhart has been fully developed by Rudolf Otto in his *The Idea of the Holy*.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

*Bhagavadgita: AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY*: BY K. NAVARATNAM, SECRETARY, THE KALANILAYAM, JAFFNA. PP. x+95. PRICE RE. 1/-

Yet another new book on the *Song Celestial* written to fulfil a distinct need and in a manner suited thereto. It is the outcome of the author's 'desire to popularise the study of it among the college students and the lay public in Ceylon'. The author frankly makes no claim to originality and with dignified humility tells that he has endeavoured only to present the essence of the various commentaries in as simple a manner as possible so that the book may serve as an introduction to the study of the text and its interpretation. He has made use of the writings of Sri Aurobindo, Lokamanya Tilak, Sir Radhakrishnan and Mr. D. S. Sarma. Mr. Navaratnam has genuinely helped towards a proper understanding of the great scripture in the South where the Saiva Siddhanta exercises a very potent sway over many religious minds and as a consequence the Gita is consigned to the group of sectarian scriptures. He has clearly shown that the Gita is not a sectarian book and that it deserves to be studied by all irrespective of their sectarian persuasions. The book has five chapters; the first supplies the historical setting and the last an evaluation of the book in the light of the outlook and needs of modern society. The second chapter epitomizes the themes of the eighteen discourses and the third the main doctrines taught in the text. The fourth chapter throws some light on the other systems of thought like Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Saiva Sid-

dhanta and draws attention to their relation to the Gita thought. The book forms the first of a projected One Rupee Series called 'The Students Library'. A Foreword from the late Prof. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri has added to the weight of the book. We hope that the book will be widely read by the students of Ceylon and others who have no acquaintance of the Gita more than the knowledge of its name.

ANNALS OF THE BHANDARKAR  
ORIENTAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE:  
SILVER JUBILEE VOLUME: EDITED BY  
R. N. DANDEKAR.

The Instituto deserves the congratulation of the scholar world for bringing out a volume of about 700 pages in these days of grave difficulties due to shortage in printing materials. The volume contains seventy research papers of widely varying size, importance and value pertaining to Veda and Avesta, Epics and Puranas, classical and modern literature, religion and philosophy, Buddhism and Jainism, History, Archaeology, Epigraphy, Linguistics, Sociology, etc. Some of the contributions like the one of Dr. Raghavan on *Anubhutisvarupacharya*, of Dr. Seth on the Age of the Rigveda and of Dr. Trivedi on The Sheet Anchor of Indian History supply really original knowledge or a new angle of vision which will be of great significance to future students of Indology. We heartily appreciate the signal service which the Institute has been doing for the last quarter of a century and wish and pray for the expansion of its usefulness and service more and more in the future.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### CYCLONE RELIEF

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION'S WORK AND APPEAL

The Ramakrishna Mission has been carrying on cyclone relief work since the last week of October, against very great difficulties of supply and transport. The area taken covers 287 villages, in the Khejuri, Nandigram and Mayna Thanas of the Midnapur District, the Saugor Thana of 24 Parganas, and the Bhograi Thana of the Balasore District. In the week-ending on the 7th February, our 10 centres distributed 1,463 mds. 16½ srs. of rice, 1105 mds. 14 srs. of paddy, 55 pieces of new cloth and Rs. 1,027/- in cash among 48,832 recipients as well as 10 lbs. of powdered milk, 19 lbs. of barley for children and patients. The Srikantha centre of the Mayna Thana has since been closed, and a new centre opened at Contai, in which area the distress is more acute. The report of the first distribution from this new centre is being awaited.

From the 4th November, 1942 to the 7th February, 1943 we distributed altogether 14,624 mds. 36½ srs. of rice, 15,088 mds. 33½ srs. of paddy, 864 mds. 37 srs. of dal, 60 mds. 22 srs. of salt, 14,385 pieces of new cloth, 1,408 pieces of shirts and frocks, 1,052 new chaddars, 7,531 blankets, 3,854 mats, 1,797 utensils, numerous used clothes and Rs. 6,905/12/- in cash, in addition to 159 lbs. of powdered milk, 1 mrd. 34 srs. of barley, 8½ srs. of sago and 24½ srs. of sugar candy for children and patients.

Our total receipts up to the 15th February are Rs. 3,14,723/-, and our total expenditure about Rs. 2,09,234/-, excluding outstanding bills for about Rs. 40,000/-. We have also received articles worth over Rs. 1,22,500/. Our weekly expenditure is roughly Rs. 20,000/-.

The unprecedented nature of the disaster and the incalculable damage done to life and property are already well known to the public. On account of the total loss of crops and cattle and the complete destruction of dwelling houses, gratuitous relief, administered for the last three months and a half, cannot be said to have improved the condition of the sufferers. Rather they are in a worse plight. For the middle-class people, who hitherto refrained from asking for doles for the sake of prestige, are now compelled to seek them, since their meagre resources have been exhausted.

Apart from the urgent need of hut construction, which has not yet been touched, the supply of good drinking water is a problem that demands immediate attention. The worst thing about the situation

is that large numbers of people, devitalised by continued starvation, are falling a prey to epidemic diseases, to combat which, although very imperfectly, we have started homoeopathic medical relief in four of our centres in the Khejuri, Nandigram and Saugor Thana.

The solution of these problems, in addition to the work of gratuitous relief, which should be continued till alternative means of subsistence have been provided for the people, is essential to save them from certain death. The limited funds at our disposal, however, will not permit us to continue our work after the middle of March.

We convey our grateful thanks to the generous donors whose active sympathy has enabled us to carry on our work so far, and we earnestly appeal to the benevolent public to make further sacrifices for thousands of our helpless sisters and brothers, who have been suffering untold miseries and are doomed to death but for timely help. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following address:—The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA  
*Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission*

16-2-43.

#### SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME MADRAS, REPORT FOR 1942.

It is very remarkable that in these trying times the Home has maintained steady progress and has successfully completed another year of its loving and efficient service. The chief event of the year was the temporary shifting of the Residential High School in March last to Uthiramerur, 53 miles from Madras, under the scheme of evacuation laid down by the Government.

There had been 79 new admissions in all the three sections together, of the College (residential section for students studying in various colleges) the High School and the Industrial School. The total strength at the end of the year was 220. About one half of the total number received scholarships, concessions from schools and colleges and private sources. The general health of the inmates was satisfactory having been safeguarded by a well-regulated life, sanitary surroundings and ample out-door activities.

Special emphasis was laid on the maintenance of day to day discipline in the discharge of duties, on moral and religious

training through instruction, congregational prayer and religious practice. Festivals and birthdays of saints were celebrated in a fitting manner.

*The College Section* :—There were 30 students in this section attending the arts Colleges, Medical College and the Government school of medicine. Of the 16 that appeared for the various examinations 14 came out successful.

*The Residential High School*.—The High School at the Uthiramerur camp had a strength of 136 at the end of the year. Plain-living and high-thinking which is the pervading feature of the residential section received the added ardour of simplicity in its new country village setting. The management as usual stressed the dignity of labour by making manual training a regular item of life and afforded ample facilities for physical training and games. Of the 22 sent up for the final examination 17 came out successful.

*The Industrial School*.—Automobile Engineering is the objective of the school and it prepares students for the L.A.E. Diploma issued by the Government. The Jubilee Workshop is fully equipped with precision tools and appliances and undertakes all kinds of repairs in any make of automobile. It is worthy of mention here that the Government have approved the proposals for the opening of a Branch Industrial school at Tyagarayanagar to train students for Artisan course.

*The Training of War Technicians* :—This Centre has been declared a civil centre. 346 war technicians are being trained here as Fitters, Electricians, Mechanists and Turners. Of the 807 admitted up-to-date, 247 have joined the Indian Army Ordnance Corps.

*The Boys' Schools at Thyagarayanagar* :—Started in 1932, the school at Thyagarayanagar has grown rapidly to meet the educational needs of the locality and its suburbs. Owing to the abnormal conditions created by the war scare in the city the total strength of the schools fell from 2615 to 2068. The Boys' High School has a Hostel attached to it which is now housed in a new Building in Doraismwamy Road. On the date of report the Hostel was 54 strong. The Hostel is managed by a Swami of the Mission who is also the resident warden.

*Endowments and Gifts* :—As usual the major collection under this head was from the Madras Secretariat Party who realized during the year Rs. 32,714—6—3. This along with the sum of Rs. 9,229—6—0 being the net amount of interest earned on their endowment brought the total so far to Rs. 3,80,202.

The total running expenditure on all the sections amounted to Rs. 70,409—10—2 and the total receipts to Rs. 56,507—14—10 resulting in a deficit of Rs. 13,901—11—4 which has been met from the Revenue Reserve Account.

The management take the opportunity to acknowledge its deep debt of gratitude to the magnanimous and ungrudging response from its well-wishers and friends and look forward to their uniform support and co-operation during more trying times ahead.

#### SRI SARADA VIDYALAYA, RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MADRAS. REPORT FOR 1942.

In presenting the fourth annual report of the Vidyalaya, the management give a heroic record of work in the midst of vicissitudes created by the war conditions and the consequent dislocations in strength. While the High School recovered during the course of the year its normal strength to the extent of 85% the Elementary school has not yet regained even half its usual strength.

The High School, the Training School and the Elementary School are the three sections that make the institution. During the year under report their strength was 597,207 and 198 respectively. All the schools have well qualified teachers on their staff. Good attention is bestowed on physical training and games on moral and religious instruction and on extra curricular activities.

Of the three sections of the Vidyalaya, the Training School section which maintains and trains destitute widows is the most outstanding effort of pure philanthropy and its finances have always been running into recurring deficits. The other sections also stand on meagre reserve. The management firmly believe that the efforts of this beneficent institution will receive better response from the public and will not languish for want of help it richly deserves.

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*The Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna falls on the 8th of March 1943.*

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

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## MAN AND THE NATION

### I

The emergence of Europe from the nationalistic fever of the nineteenth century to a kind of convalescence in the twentieth with all its dreams of a federal world state was no sign of real recovery. For Europe soon fell into two consecutive relapses, the first and the second world wars precipitated by the still active germs of rabid nationalism appearing under the modern garb of a 'new world order'. Europe today professes to be planning and panting at heart for world reconstruction while she is fighting the world war with her limbs. The Dictators cry themselves hoarse over a 'new world'; the Big Powers talk glibly of democracy and nation; but none speaks of the individual. The individual, the family, the nation and the world: this is the edifice of man's social evolution and consciousness. The reconstructionists are busy raising the edifice and the foundations are missing! The individual has long been elbowed out of existence. He is lost in the crowd, dissolved in the class. The state wants the masses, the dumb millions for their political designs and not the individual with a backbone. The modern leader wants the multitude to obey his single wave

of the hand. Aldous Huxley puts it rightly when he says that the twentieth century saw the emergence of the sheep-like social man and the god-like leader. And we see the god-like leader being followed by the sheep-like millions to the 'front' to answer their national destiny.

Besides laying the axe at the root of the individual the new-born child of the nineteenth century nationalism is now paving the graveyard of all world peace. The essential idea of the nineteenth century nationalism was the 'legitimate claim' of every nation to complete sovereignty regardless of any other nation. This had led to a world of independent sovereign nations which has meant a world of perpetual injuries, a world of states constantly waging war or preparing for it. The stronger nationalities made ambitious advances towards the lesser ones under the pretext of 'civilizing' them with fatal consequences to the latter. Such developments of nationalism were dangerously unsound working ideas, as they unleashed more and more of the primitive in man and eclipsed all civilization and progress. It not only swallowed the individual

but set at naught all ideas of national well-being and world peace.

Aided and enlivened by new synthetic forces like religion and education and emboldened, as it were, by the scientific advances the modern man would have played his part well in the new romance of enlarging human co-operations and would have adjusted himself wonderfully to a far more comprehensive form of human affairs. But instead of liberal and civilizing influences, narrow and cramping national devotions became the sources of his inspiration. They blinded his vision to the bright dawn of our true state, the state to which every man owes his utmost political effort, the nascent federal world state to which human necessities point. To make men conscious of this necessity must come to him the realisation that our true God is the God of all men. Nationalism as a God must follow the tribal gods to the limbo. The realisation that our true nationality is mankind is the greatest necessity.

How far will modern men lay hold upon and identify themselves with this necessity of widening our affiliations, devotions and aspirations and set themselves to revise their ideas and remake their institutions and educate the coming generation to the final extension of true citizenship will largely depend on what political philosophy they accept as their own and what social order they adopt for the purpose of practising that philosophy. It is of utmost importance to remember that the aim of all political order is and must be, to help the individual to develop himself completely; and this can come only when each shares upto his capacity in determining the policy and destiny of his group. In a benign political order

not only should the individual get real opportunity for real self-development but such development must be along lines that shall effectively promote the upliftment of his fellows. There is no such thing as the human self in isolation; there is no ego without the other. If the self-development of the individual is a progressive consciousness and realisation on the part of the individual of his own nature and needs, it must at the same time be an increasing appreciation of and co-operation in the unfoldment of the personality of the other which is the society. Where conditions help and hasten the self-realisation of the individual in a way that advances the fulfilment of others there the nation definitely stands to reach out its ideal destiny. For the nation is but a collection of individuals. Thus we are strengthened to argue for making the individual the basis of all true political endeavour. Moreover, as the individual is, in a spiritual sense, the seat of all values, political values not excluded, it is possible to pitch politics to a high key by making it serve the highest spiritual ends of the individual. This is done by adopting means answerable to the ends: and to achieve this is to spiritualise politics.

When Aristotle said that man is a political animal, he must have intended to stress man's natural disposition for moral social conduct only. But in the modern sense the word politics covers world-politics and modern man is expected to have developed the psychology of international relationships. From Aristotle to our days is no easy transition. But it is possible to make this transition in thought smooth and natural in the light of Hindu realisations. Hindu wisdom has always

insisted on man being essentially spirit. With the realization that one is at base the spirit, one captures the consciousness of an all-pervasiveness, a sense of oneself residing in every being that lives and every atom that exists. Such a realisation is a good start for benign large-scale political action, even if the world be one's field. But until that 'total perspective' which true philosophy alone can confer, is gained, politics turns into self-seeking perhaps on a national scale and in the long run bars all peace and national prosperity.

Government today suffers precisely like science for lack of philosophy. Philosophy bears to science the same relationship which statesmanship bears to politics: movement guided by total perspective as against aimless and individual self-seeking. Just as the pursuit of knowledge becomes scholasticism when divorced from the actual needs of man and life, so the pursuit of politics becomes a destructive bedlam when divorced from science and philosophy. If it is wrong to trust the natural body to empirics, it is more disastrously wrong to have states managed by empirical statesmen. Only a philosopher king is fit to guide a nation. For there is no altruism among nations. And the rights of states are now what the rights of individuals used to be; that is, they are *mights*. The states have easily transferred into themselves the contagion of the animal instincts from the individual but have failed to copy his nobler emotions.

## II

It is a lesson from history that highly regenerate individuals can inspire large-scale social reform by transferring into others the zeal for higher life. So then the first step to lift the states from an unregenerate

life is to refine, remould and equip the individual for lofty and noble political activity. Although the individual in not by nature equipped for the mutual forbearance of social order, that he can be made fit for it by the organisation and purification of the sentiments and emotions in him is a truth from social psychology. Most men are at heart individualistic rebels against law or custom: the social instincts are latent and weaker than the individualistic and need reinforcement. Such reinforcement is obtained through association; if even merely in the family, sympathy comes, a feeling of kind and at last of kindness. We like what is like us. 'We pity not only a thing we have loved, but also one which we judge similar to ourselves.' Thus it is we say that there is no human self in isolation. There is always the other. And the more the self reflects itself in the other, the more it is morally and spiritually strengthened and nourished. So then all expansion of the self is a social process and all moral conduct is essentially social conduct. Ethical atomism is an impossibility. The higher forms of social conduct which alone are usually regarded as moral involve voluntary control and regulation of instinctive impulses. Volition or voluntary control proceeds from the idea of the self and from the sentiment or organised system of emotions and impulses centred about that idea. When McDougall speaks of the passage from the lower to the higher social conduct being effected by the development of self-consciousness, he refers to this idea of the self.

It is only when we trace the growth of self-consciousness that we can understand how it comes to play its part in determining conduct of the kind that alone renders possible the

complex life of highly organised societies. For we find that the idea of the self and the self-regarding sentiment are essentially social products, that their development is effected by constant interplay between personalities, between the self and society; that for this reason the *complex conception of self thus attained implies constant reference to other and to society in general, and is in fact, not merely a conception of self but always of one's self in relation to others.*<sup>1</sup> (Italics ours) It is in this conception of the self in reference to other selves that we are specially interested here. For in that conception of the self lies the genesis of the idea of the social self and the root of all morality especially of political morality.

McDougall tracing the development of self-consciousness in the individual speaks of a negative self-feeling which incorporates itself in the self-regarding sentiment and reveals the self-sacrificing and altruistic content of it. In other words, the self-regarding sentiment gives itself up to extensions. Not only does the individual's self identify with his own family and relations but further still the growing child is led on to identify himself with and to extend his self-regarding sentiment to his school, his college, his town, his profession, as a class, and finally to his country or nation as a whole. Thus the self-regarding sentiment in a process of progressive self-realisation through its impulse of active sympathy establishes harmony of feeling and emotion with his fellows in society and thus starts the individual on a healthy attitude towards society by putting in him the nucleus of a sound political philosophy. Extensions of the self-regarding sentiment thus constitute a very important

part of the moral equipment of the individual; for, they lead to the subjection of immediate personal ends in the service of social co-operation undertaken to secure collective ends that individual action alone is powerless to achieve. They raise our emotions and conduct to an over-individual plane and make us fit for high and noble large-scale political action. From what has been said above regarding the natural disposition of the human self to expand and fill up society, some spiritual implications emerge. It is the spiritual in the self that helps it overcome limitations and embrace larger boundaries and absorb wider sympathies and affiliations. Here is a substantial earnest of the individual's capacity for broader affections and for benign political activity even on an international scale. Hence it must be the high purpose of all political orders worth the name to turn to advantage these potentialities in the individual.

### III

India has always recognised and has harnessed to social benefit this truth of the human self growing into moral and spiritual extensions. It has been able to do so because Hindu wisdom has seen in the self or Atman, the all-comprehensive reality, the Brahman. Hence to the Hindu seers the self-regarding sentiment of which McDougall speaks of, is always the Brahman-regarding sentiment. The individual to them is the top of all values, nay, it is All-Value. They have irrigated this truth into channels of practical application. If the individual self at the pink of self-realisation envelopes not only the society but comes to comprehend all in a relation of identity, it can with ease bring about transformations in the social body

<sup>1</sup> McDougall : *Social Psychology* p. 162.

and mind by introducing in its own inner realm suitable changes. The life of highly spiritual persons transforming the lives of others is an instance in point. The idea of accepting the pangs of self-denial (which is more in the nature of fulfilment than of suffering) for the purpose of objective correction, moral and spiritual, flows itself from the above. There is at the root of all religious feeling the intuition of a ' responsiveness ' from the other. Here the other is society and it is in society that transformations are sought. Hence it is easy for the individual to reflect subjective transformations in the social body and mind. And the more effective it becomes when the means sought is the path of self-invited ' suffering ' which in fact is no suffering to the person concerned. Suffering in some form or other enters into Divine experience. And the sympathy from society for any kind of divine experience is implicit and abiding.

Self-denial directed towards spiritual ends although mortifying to the flesh is nourishing to the spirit. The path of Pravritti feeds the flesh while the path of Nivritti illumines the spirit. The Nivritti Marga is a return to the real source of life and is effective as the conservation of values in the spiritual plane. It is exactly here that the religious element comes in; for, all religion is an affirmation that values are conserved. The emphasis Hindu Dharma lays on chastening politics even to the extent of spiritualising it, is an emphasis in fact on the conservation of values. In the eyes of Hindu Dharma all activity political or otherwise is spiritual even as all matter to it is spirit. All activity is to be consecrated on the altar of the spirit even as all matter is to seek fulfilment by sublation in the spirit.

Spirit alone can conserve all values and regenerate them at will, for the sake of matter, for the benefit of mankind. The individual being the temple of the spirit can grow into the realization of itself being the seat, nay the gauge and centre of all values and can come not only to hold but also fulfil the bright promise of the regeneration of mankind.

#### IV

The Hindu genius had scored high in all the above realisations but an all-round fructification of such riches in the masses of the country is evidently lacking. Sages and saints have come to shed light and lustre on this land of ours, but the masses have not been lifted to any appreciable heights. Nay, they lie so low and none to do them reverence. Ill-prepared as the masses are for the message of the spirit, they either take it as sponsoring a life of indifference to this world and choose a life of inertia misconstrued as one of devotion to the spirit, or give up hope of higher life as impossible. This incapacity of the Indian masses to understand the real emphasis of Hindu Dharma has struck those who have made efforts to study her problems and all of them have unanimously stressed the need of educating them and lifting them up by giving them back their lost individuality. If Swami Vivekananda has with all the emphasis at his command called for a wide national effort in the direction of educating and uplifting the masses of India, it is because he believed India would fulfil her great destiny when her masses would prove themselves fit as the nurseries of her ideals and spiritual realisations. 'Until the last man is fed and clothed,' said Swami Vivekananda, 'until the avenues of self-development are fully thrown open to him, I shall not sit

quiet.' His panacea of the man-making religion was meant to build every run-down nerve of the individual, make him stand up and join in the march of the nation. His religion was not only man-making but nation-building too. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses of India are once more well-educated, well-fed and well-cared for. The faces of the masses tell the sad tale of a weary and burdened life. Until the masses are happy, until the last crushed under-dog receives his full measure of solace, relief and hope, we have no right to talk of society or nation. It is only a weltering chaos of social units with no organisation. This is the voice of Hindu Dharma. True it is, India never looked upon its masses as a means for her political plans or imperialistic designs as the Fascists do. India has fully recognised the individual as the seat and summit of all human and superhuman values. Her attitude to the individual has been one of devotion and reverential recognition, an attitude that shines in the long history of representative and true democracy Indian people enjoyed for ages past. If that glorious day is set the contagion from the west is responsible. We join in spirit and in words a thinking western mind who expressed the wish that the eagle of democracy would descend from her rarified heights and perch for a while on the shoulders of common men and women. He lamments the wretched logic that prompts his men to fight for democracy in remote corners of the globe and then to refuse to share it with a salesclerk! Too many in the West deal in high sounding platitudes about the 'brotherhood of man' but exhibit an ugly caste consciousness. Before we can honestly breathe the word,

democracy, we must acquire a deeper understanding of the immortal hope that originally inspired it and the mortal obligations that keep it alive. The real pivot on which our democratic life must turn is the deep realisation that *every individual is a unit of democracy—a dignified, essential unit—and that our democracy works, if at all, only to the extent that every individual member makes it work!*

Much of our democracy is sunshine democracy. We shall not have true democracy until we are banded together in indivisible equality, no man unnoticed or crowded out or less than his brother. The real triumph of democracy will not be recorded until the dignity of the individual is recognised. Europe is indulging in a costly and criminal experiment of attempting to construct the nation or the New world on the grave of the individual. They hardly seem to realize that they are building on sands. Every individual, every man, woman and child is a tissue of the nation. If the West thinks it not worth while to save them from being ground away in the treadmill of a cramping factory life and from the rapacity of the 'Super-State' then woe unto their civilization. The new blood of life can rush into their half-dead tissues only when the avenues of self-development are thrown open to them *unreservedly*. Such tissue-building is the first step towards nation-building. That way lies the intrinsic health and strength of the nation, a strength which is sure to baffle in the bud all ambitious advances of greedy Powers. Thus can be obviated all possibilities of future aggression and preparation for wars. Before banishing such possibilities all talk of nation-building and world reconstruction is mere moon-shine.

## SHELLEY AND THE VEDANTA

By Diwan Bahadur T. Bhujanga Rao, M.A., B.L.

### I

Stopford Brooke describes the philosophy of Shelley as 'idealistic pantheism'. It resembles the Vedanta so much that a discussion of how Shelley arrived at his philosophy may be interesting. But it may at once be said that Shelley was not, like Emerson, for example, a student of Indian philosophy. Shelley's philosophy was merely a reaction from the Calvinistic theology that prevailed in his time. Stopford Brooke refers to that theology in one place in his writings as a 'dreadful theology'. Whether the description is fully justified or not, there can be no doubt that Shelley believed the theology to be dreadful. Shelley chose for attack three principal dogmas of the Calvinistic creed (as he understood it); and it is in reaction from those doctrines that he developed his own philosophy,—in so far as the intuitions of a poet may be described as his philosophy.

### II

The first dogma attacked by Shelley was the doctrine of a 'jealous', anthropomorphic deity, hurling thunderbolts from the skies and ordaining the 'reprobation' of the greater part of mankind. Shelley revolted from the conception and described the Calvinistic God as a Moloch of vindictiveness :

The avenging God,  
Who, prototype of human misrule,  
sits  
High in heaven's realm, upon a  
golden throne,  
Even like an earthly king.

(*Queen Mab*)

The next dogma was the doctrine of an eternal hell. Shelley rejected it and pronounced the horrors of hell to be but figments of theological invention :

There needeth not the hell that  
bigots frame  
To punish those who err.

(*Queen Mab*)

The third dogma was the doctrine of Original Sin, the doctrine which, in the words of Stopford Brooke, 'stains the child with evil from its birth and brings it into the world as the child of the devil'. Shelley treated this doctrine with scorn and proclaimed that the soul was untainted with sin :

Soul is not more polluted than the  
beams  
Of heaven's pure orb ere round  
their rapid lines  
The taint of earth-born atmos-  
pheres arise.

(*Queen Mab*)

### III

In reaction from the conception of a 'jealous', anthropomorphic Deity, sitting high in the heavens, Shelley conceived of God as the Eternal Love pervading and animating creation. In this he was not alone. The barren deism of the eighteenth century, and the revival of Calvinism in the early years of the nineteenth century, made other poets in England, such as Wordsworth, seek for God in Nature and in Man. Wordsworth spoke of his feeling

A sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply  
interfused

Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

(*Tintern Abbey Revisited*)

Shelley felt this sense in an acuter way. He could acknowledge fraternity with the elemental Beings of Earth and Air and Ocean and proclaim that they participate equally with man in the Divine life.

Earth, Ocean, Air, beloved brotherhood !  
If our great Mother has imbued my soul  
With aught of natural piety to feel Your love and recompense the boon with mine,  
· · · · · · · · · withdraw  
No portion of your wonted favour now.

(*Alastor*)

To Shelley, the whole world, with its trees and rivers and lakes and mountains, was a manifestation of the Divine Life and an attestation to the Divine Love :

The One Spirit's plastic stress  
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there  
All new successions to the forms they wear,  
· · · · · · · · · And bursting in its beauty and its might  
From trees and beasts and men into the heaven's light.

(*Adonais*)

The Deity was, to Shelley, often the Spirit of Love with whom he could commune :

Thou art the wine whose drunkenness is all  
We can desire, O Love !

(*Prince Athanase*)

The Deity was also the Spirit of Beauty whom he addressed thus :

Spirit of Beauty, thou dost consecrate  
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon  
Of human thought or form.

(*Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*)

But though often the Deity to Shelley was impersonal, the personal aspect of God was not absolutely excluded. For, Shelley could also write :

Day had awakened all things that be ;  
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free,  
And the milkmaid's song, and the mower's scythe,  
All rose to do the task He set to each  
Who shaped us to His ends and not our own.

(*Boat on the Serchio*)

#### IV

In reaction from the Calvinistic doctrine of an eternal hell and of everlasting damnation for the greater portion of mankind, Shelley propounded the doctrine of what may be called Life-in-Death or Salvation-in-Death. Shelley was an ardent student of Plato. Plato not merely held that the world is a scene of misery and illusion but that, to use the words of Walter Pater, 'for the soul to have come into a human body at all was the seed of disease in it, the beginning of its own proper death'. Shelley imbibed these ideas and declared that human life was a dim, vast vale of tears and illusion :

This life

Of error and ignorance and strife  
Where nothing is but all things seem  
And we the shadows of a dream.

(*Sensitive Plant*)

Shelley at times soared into the highest flights of idealism and found the world to be an insubstantial pageant and 'such stuff as dreams are made of':

This whole  
Of suns, and worlds and men and  
beasts and flowers,  
. . . . .  
Is but a vision : all that it inherits  
Are motes of a sick eye, bubbles  
and dreams.

(*Hellas*)

But to Shelley the escape from this vale of misery was through Death :

Death is a gate of dreariness and  
gloom  
That leads to azure isles and  
beaming skies,  
And happy regions of eternal hope.

(*Queen Mab*)

Shelley held that the period of man's stay in this world was a period when his heavenly radiance was dimmed by the vapours of mortal life but that the mystagogue of Death would transport man to his true realm :

Life, like a dome of many-coloured  
glass  
Stains the white radiance of eter-  
nity,  
Till Death tramples it to fragments.

(*Adonais*)

It is unfortunate that Shelley did not live long enough to study Indian philosophy, with its teaching of the evolution of the ordinary human soul through a series of incarnations in this world and of the advanced soul through a series of stages in the other worlds. The Greeks no doubt often referred to the theory of re-incarnation, but they more or less played with that doctrine. Shelley, too, played with that theory as a fancy, as, for example in his poem *With a Guitar, to Jane*. But there is nothing to show that Shelley held the theory

of reincarnation seriously. The result has been that, while his theory of Salvation-in-Death may be true of the most perfect saints (called *Jeevanmuktas* in India), it is not easy to accept it as true of all mankind. Between the porfectibility of man and his actual perfection, Shelley's idealism could see no distinction.

## V

The last dogma of Calvinism attacked by Shelley was the dogma of Original Sin. This dogma took no account of the innate divinity in man. But, modifying so as to suit the requirements of pantheism the doctrine of Love expounded by Plato in the dialogues of the *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*, Shelley advanced the counter-doctrine of what may be called the divinity of man. He maintained that, far from being tainted with sin from the hour of its birth, the soul of man is a portion of the being of God, a spark from the Divine Fire :

An atom of the Eternal, whose own  
smile  
Enfolds itself, and may be felt, not  
seen,  
O'er the grey rocks, blue waves,  
and forests groen.

(*Epipsychedion*)

Combining this belief with his doctrine of Life-in-Death, Shelley declared that after death the soul awakes to a consciousness of its native dignity and dwells in an everlasting union of love and bliss with the eternal God :

The pure spirit shall flow  
Back to the burning fountain  
whence it came,  
A portion of the Eternal, which  
must glow  
Through time and change unquench-  
ably the same.

(*Adonais*)

Shelley therefore asserted with jubilant enthusiasm that disburdened of its corporeal frame, the soul of Keats was merged in the glory of the Divine :

He is made one with Nature. There  
is heard  
His voice in all her music.

He is a presence to be felt and known  
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,  
Spreading itself to wherce'er that Power may move  
Which has withdrawn his being to its own.

(*Adonais*)

Indeed, so strong was Shelley's faith in the high destiny of man to partake

in the Being of God that he claimed that he himself would realise the consummation designed for all the world :

That sustaining Love  
Which, through the web of being  
blindly wove  
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,  
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of  
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,  
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

(Adonais)

The *Adonais* was published in July 1821. The fire that Shelley referred to in the above lines took him to its abode in July 1822.

## JNANA PANCHAMI (A Jain Holy day)

*Popatla P. Shah, B.A.*

It is from Hinduism, the mother faith that Jainism derives its inspiration for insistence on the observance of *holydays*. Thus Jnana Panchami is one of the special holy days observed by the Jains. The Jains have two kinds of holy days. Some holy days they enjoy with dinners and rejoicings and some they observe with fasting for self-purification. The Akshaya Tritiya, the Parana following the Samvatsari, the Kartiki Poornima are holy days of gaety, though many Jains do not observe them as gala days. Holy days such as Ashadhi Pakhi (the fourteenth day of the bright half of Ashadha), the Samvatsari, the Jnana Panchami, the Mauna Ekadasi and the most sacred holy days of the Paryushana are days of austerity, religious performance and fasts. These holy days

are meant for self-examination and self-purification. Fasting is the chief feature of these days. A Jaina fast always consists in abstinence from food and sometimes from water too for thirty-six hours. If Monday is the day of fasting, then the fast begins just after the Sunday sunset and is broken on Tuesday after sunrise or even later than that.

Jnana Panchami is thus one of such holy-days observed by fasting. It is, I think, a special holy day, the parallel of which can perhaps be hardly found in any other sect. As its very name reveals it is observed in honour of 'True Knowledge'.

The day is meant for the worship of knowledge. Jainism gives more importance to knowledge than action. It says : 'first knowledge and then

action.' It means that we ought to know first everything about the action which we usually want to do. The 'why' and 'wherefore' of every action, should be first known or studied. Again the goal of life, spiritual goal of course, should be known at first. So every action must start from a knowledge of its high aim.

Thus to emphasise the true importance of knowledge a special holy day is commanded to be observed. True knowledge in Jainism means the knowledge of and faith in the existence of the soul and its fulfilment, or more clearly, the unfailing confidence that self is the only truth. Then all that aims at helping this truth comes naturally under the province of knowledge; and so whatever is good or tends to do good in idea and speech becomes also a part and parcel of knowledge.

Therefore a word or a letter, not only wrongly-meant or equivocated but also mispronounced or mis-spelt is a sin according to Jainism.

The Jnana Panchami is meant for self-examination whether we have acted against the dignity of sacred knowledge, have committed sins above-mentioned, or have envied or afflicted, insulted or dishonoured the learned. If we do not honour a learned person adequately we are committing a sin against Jnanachara.

But this passive observance is not the only thing. We are asked to try to find out the learned persons who possess knowledge for doing good and to respect them; nay, to serve them with all our ability. We are also commanded to increase the instruments for spreading knowledge and thus to found libraries, to help the students and to assist and encourage writers. The one condition in doing

this is that such spreading of knowledge for general or individual welfare should not entail any harm to human beings.

The ultimate goal of this worship of knowledge is according to Jainism the attainment of 'Keval Jnana' or Kaivalya (Supreme knowledge), and then Nirvana or Moksha.

The holy day is generally observed by the Swetambar Moortipoojak Jains.

The origin seems to have a greater practical and religiously material side too. During the lifetime and after the Nirvana of Lord Mahavira the Agamas or the Jain Sutras were handed over by one generation to another of Yatis through memory. After 980 years from the Nirvana Day the Sastras were first written on palm leaves or Tal leaves. Then these Tal or Tamal leaves in the form of books were to be preserved; so they were kept and taken care of in rooms specially meant for them. They were often taken out and read or studied by the Sadhus. Thus the well-known Jain Bhandaras or the ancient libraries sprang up. Then paper was introduced in place of leaves. Writers were often engaged to copy these Sastras, over and above the Yatis who also did the work. Many of these Tamal leaves and paper pages show us the fine taste for art, adorning them. These Bhandaras at times had to be hidden from the eye of the invaders. They were to be looked after and taken care of, lest they would be the food of moth and such other insects. So it was commanded that on the fifth day of the bright half of Kartik annually, i.e. on every Jnana Panchami day, all the books of the Bhandaras were to be exhibited to the public in good arrangement. And this well arranged store of know-

ledge was to be honoured and worshipped by every Jaina and such worship constitutes the observance of Jnana Panchami.

The Jains (Moortipoojaka Swetambara sect particularly) at present observe the holy day by the sacred sight of the Bhandaras. Before this collection of religious books they bow, sing prayers, kindle incense and offer rice, betel-nuts, cocoanuts and such other things in devotion to True Knowledge, praying that they may be able to attain it. Many Jains do observe fast also on this day.

Often the scene of such ceremonial is not very attractive. Neat, gaudy and rich dresses with vivid colours do not at all invite the admiration of the majority of the Jains, who take pride in Ahimsa and detest the killing even

of an invisible insect and put on garments which for their production do call for various kinds of killing. Also simplicity and not gaudy frippery is the natural necessity of such holy days. But the mode of worship is not so simple, serene and silent as the occasion requires. It is the humble suggestion of the writer that there is enough scope for purifying and reforming the performance in a nobler way.

It is earnestly hoped that the Jain brethren of all sects will take to the observance of this holy day in the proper reverential spirit, not only by a life of simplicity and solemn prayers but by widening their scope of assistance to the students, and to the spreading of knowledge both lay and spiritual.

## 'ALL THAT WE CHERISH IN OUR MODES OF THOUGHT'

*By Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D.*

The best minds of our times are at schemes for post-war reconstruction. They are busily engaged in preparing blue prints for a new World Order. In spite of the cynic who would see nothing that is either new or orderly about the new social order envisaged by the great thinkers, most people would agree that our present world has gone awry and requires drastic re-making. Humanity is in a pretty bad way. Unless something is done—and done quickly—to save it, it will go the way of the pre-historic animals whose relics are to be found buried in caves or exhibited in museums. It is natural, therefore, that all right-

thinking men should be worried about the future of their kind and plan for a better order, avoiding the blunders of the past.

Planning, thus, is no doubt a necessity to-day more than ever. But there is the danger of moulding the world 'into the likeness of hell', if proper ideals do not guide the planning. The Totalitarian states offer the world a new order, where the individual, far from being an end in himself, will be a slave to a gigantic war-machine and a cog in the wheel of state. But no freedom-loving man would welcome such an order and sign his own death-warrant. Any

future order, if it is to liberate us from the old disorder under which we labour, should guarantee social justice and peace between nations. It should provide for men ample opportunities for self-development and harmonious living.

In such a world we cannot hope to keep all that each one of us individually cherishes. Many of what Bacon called the Idols of the Cave may have to be broken before the New Humanity can be installed. But there are certain fundamental modes of man's thought which should be conserved in any stable social order. The new world cannot be built on a foundation of emptiness. In planning for the new, one should not ignore human conservatism which is a fact. As in the physical order, so in the spiritual realm, there is what may be called the principle of Conservation. It will be absurd, for instance, to think that under the new dispensation 2 and 3 will make 6 or 4 will cease to be 4. One may not hope, therefore, for a complete extinction in the future order of what the past has stood for. We cannot look forward to begin with the year One. Those elements of the existing order which are valuable should be preserved in any future community. The inalienable factors of the human mind, the ideas and ideals that make for man's progress in charity and perfection should all be conserved and cherished and can be neglected only at our peril.

What are these that are vital for human progress? I would answer in four words—art, morality, philosophy and religion. All these involve value judgments and are implied in our modes of thought seeking ways of expression in life. There is no man who is absolutely void of artistic

sense, moral living, a philosophic view and religious experience.

A puritanic Mughal Emperor was averse to art, music, dance and even poetry. But he wrote Arabic in a beautiful and masterly hand, and had a liking for fine Chinaware. The artistic sense, if smothered in certain ways, expresses itself in other modes. If puritanism has not had a lasting influence on mankind, it is because of its negative austerity. None of us is devoid of the aesthetic sense in some direction or other. We may not be able to say why the compositions of Beethoven are superior to those of Bach or identify a *raga*; but surely we do recognise the difference between the beautiful symphony played by an orchestra and the discordant noises produced by a chorus of cats.

What is true of art is equally true of morality. There is not a single individual who is not capable of passing moral judgment on his own and on others' conduct. Even a band of thieves observe certain moral codes in their behaviour towards one another. Otherwise they cannot function as a body. The criminal and the profligate are immoral but not non-moral; and to be immoral is better than to be non-moral. In the words of a distinguished thinker of our land, 'There is no saint without a past and no sinner without a future.'

Philosophy, the third factor we would cherish, is to be found among all men, in whatever stage of civilisation they may be. In Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Touchstone asks Corin, 'Hast any philosophy in thee, shepherd?' to which the shepherd replies, 'No more but that I know the more one sickens the worse at ease he is; and that he that wants money, means and content is without

three good friends ; that the property of rain is to wet and fire to burn ; that good pastures make fat sheep, and that a great cause of the night is lack of the sun ; that he that hath learned no wit by nature nor art may complain of good breeding or comes of a very dull kindred'. Upon this Touchstone remarks, ' Such a one is a natural philospher'. May be ; but nevertheless he is a philosopher. The shepherd has begun to think about men and things *en masse*, to read in the particulars the universals that sustain them, and to look behind the seeming for something real and permanent. To that extent he is a philosopher. Thus philosophy is ingrained in all. Even he who opposes philosophy or says that it is futile does so by a kind of philosophy.

Nearer to man's heart than even art, morality and philosophy is religion. It was in the context of religion that the arts and ethical codes, science and philosophy, had their origin and growth. When the pre-historic man deified natural phenomena and offered worship to the unseen powers, he was expressing his dissatisfaction with the first look of things and was groping towards something super-physical and super-psychical. At no stage in human history was the religious sense absent from the domain of Man's experience and any attempt to discard religion, one finds, ends in a frustration. A contemporary politico-economic movement with a distinctive ideology has tried to dispense with religion, denouncing it as the opium of the people. But all that it has succeeded in doing is to substitute for the old drug a new narcotic. The truth is, however much man may try to get away from religion sometimes, he cannot, for religion is his real life, a

light unto his soul and a lamp unto his feet.

What is there so fundamental, it may be asked, in art, morality, philosophy and religion that it is impossible for us to do without them? Why should they be conserved and cherished? The answer is not far to seek. Human nature would not be what it is and cannot reach its full stature, if it is not fed on these. Man is not a mere food-seeking and tool-making animal. He is a feeling, willing and thinking being. Above all, he is essentially Spirit or Self. The neglect of any aspect of human nature will spell de-humanization and stultification of personality. The starving of the spirit in man will result in a suicide more to be dreaded than the destruction of the body. The plentitude of being and fullness of life can be realised only when feelings are expressed through the creation and appreciation of works of art, when the will is directed by an integrated character, when thought is trained to get behind the appearances and understand the conditions of experience, and finally when all the aspects of man's nature are sublimated through the removal of their limitations and thus made whole. To accomplish this end, art, morality, philosophy and religion are essential.

It is the function of art to elevate man from the baser levels of animal existence. Artistic creation and aesthetic appreciation are expressions of the 'higher life'. The works of literary, plastic and musical art do not merely please but also instruct and unfold the inner meaning of things. The real artist is a seer who tries to recapture with the help of imperfect aids like colours and contours, words and sounds, the beauty and

perfection that he has seen. Viewed in this light, it will be evident that art without morality is a kind of dope. The virtuoso must be a virtuous man. Virtue consists in self-possession and control over passions. It is that quality of character which guarantees that action shall be governed by the whole self of man. When a person acts, being driven by his instincts and impulses, he is not free but fettered. Real freedom is achieved only when the various elements of human nature like impulses and desires are harmonised and harnessed so that they may subserve the purposes of goodness which is the self, when the eye of the soul turns round and with it the *whole* soul, as Plato said, from darkness to light, from the transient to the eternal. This harmonising and harnessing, or turning round requires intelligence and wisdom. Virtue depends on our *insight* into the nature of the whole, and it is this insight that is sought for in philosophy. The Greeks praised wisdom or insight as the supreme virtue and the source of all virtues. According to Socrates, virtue is knowledge, and ignorance is the only vice. Most metaphysical systems of

Indian thought trace all evil to ignorance or *avidya* and teach that for reaching the spiritual goal wisdom or *jnana* is necessary. This does not mean, however, that bare intellectualism will do. Philosophy in India has been regarded not as a mere way of thought but as a way of life. It is religion, then, that should inspire the philosophic quest. Realisation of the ultimate principle of the universe is the goal of religion. The religious creeds, it is true, have led in the past to strife and bloodshed. But true religion does not divide; it unites. It makes a man transcend the narrow circles of family, clan and country; and makes him a citizen of the world. An eminent philosopher-scientist of the West characterises religion as world loyalty. If the future order is to be a better order than the one in which we live, it should be so designed that it helps mankind to progress towards the ideal of harmonious and integral life; and for this purpose we should conserve the saner pursuits that are directed towards the realisation of beauty, goodness and truth which are not three values but three aspects of the ultimate reality which is our goal.

So I repeat we never can have a true view of man unless we have a love for him. Civilization must be judged and prized, not by the amount of power it has developed, but by how much it has evolved and given expression to, by its laws and institutions the love of humanity. The first question and the last which it has to answer is, whether and how far it recognises man more and more as spirit than as a machine.

. . . . When either the state or some powerful group of men began to look upon the people as a mere instrument of their power : when, by compelling weaker races to slavery and trying to keep them down by every means, man struck at the foundation of his greatness, his own love of freedom and fairplay. Civilization can never sustain itself upon cannibalism of any form. For that by which alone man is true can only be nourished by love and justice.

—Rabindranath Tagore.

## THE SCHOOL OF SRI CHAITANYA<sup>1</sup>

By Dr. P. T. Raju, M.A., Ph. D., Sastri.

There is a Vedantic school the importance of which has not been recognised in the academical circles in India. This system is called the Achintyabhedabheda or the incomprehensible identity-difference. Its founder is Sri Chaitanya, but the philosophical ideas of the school are expounded by Jivagosvami in his *Tattvasandarbha*, *Sarvasamvadini*, etc. Baladeva wrote a commentary on the *Brahmasutras* from the standpoint of this school, and he commented upon Jivagosvami's works also. This school belongs to Vaishnavism and originated in Bengal.

As the very name Achintyabhedabheda suggests, the school contends that both identity and difference hold between the Brahman on the one hand and the *jiva* and nature on the other. Like some other Vedantic schools this too tries to reconcile both identity and difference with the help of the concepts of thing and its power or energy. The Brahman has three kinds of Sakti: Parasakti, Aparasakti or Yogamaya, and Mayasakti or Prakriti. The last only is *jada* or insentient. 'In the Sastras Brahman is described as being both the operative and material cause of the world. He is the operative cause through his power called Parasakti. He is the material cause through his other two Saktis called Aparasakti and Avitayasakti, which work through the souls and nature (matter).'<sup>2</sup> Both identity and diffe-

rence hold between the Brahman and the three Saktis. The relation between the Brahman and the Parasakti is like that between fire and heat.<sup>3</sup> But as a matter of fact there is no difference between fire and heat and so they are identical; and yet we do distinguish between them, and the distinction is made by this school with the help of the concept of *visesha*,<sup>4</sup> which may be translated as peculiarity. Though substance and attribute are the same and denotatively identical, yet we distinguish between the two and the distinction is based upon some peculiarity which the two possess. Of course in understanding this school heat has to be taken as the power or activity and not merely as a quality which connotes something static. Yet all the three Saktis are regarded as *viseshanas* or attributes of this school. It is said that the three Saktis may be called the parts (*amsas*) of the Brahman because the latter is qualified (*visishta*) by them.<sup>5</sup> But they are better understood in their dynamic aspect.

Parasakti is the highest of the three Saktis and controls the other two.<sup>6</sup> Through it the Brahman becomes the efficient cause of creation. This Sakti is internal to the Brahman, while Maya or Prakriti is external.<sup>7</sup> This latter Sakti transforms itself (*parinamate*) into the material world. It stupifies the *jiva* and keeps him in bondage; only when he overcomes it and detaches himself from it does he

<sup>1</sup> Extract from the author's *Idealistic Thought of India* (to be published).

<sup>2</sup> Baladeva's *Govindabhashya*, p. 206. (Sacred Books of the Hindus).

<sup>3</sup> Jivagosvami: *Tattvasandarbha* with the Commentaries of Baladeva and Radhamohan Gosvami, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Baladeva's *Siddhantaratna* p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 124.

<sup>5</sup> *Tattvasandarbha*, p. 147.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 92.

attain liberation. Liberation is only the realization by the *jiva* of his original state of purity.<sup>8</sup> This Mayasakti is not unreal, and even after the liberation of the *jivas* it remains attached to the Brahman like a speck though it cannot be a different entity.

In between the two comes the Aparasakti or Yogamaya, with the help of which the Brahman creates the world of *jivas*. This Sakti is naturally conscious and not insentient like Maya. This school seems to understand the relation between the Brahman and the *jivas* in terms of the relation between whole and parts (*amsah*). But then how are we to understand that the Brahman which is naturally indivisible has parts? To get over this difficulty the school formulates the concept of Yogamaya.<sup>9</sup> Yogamaya is really the peculiar power of the Brahman by which the one assumes the form of diversity though remaining one. The parts are not really parts of a whole which is indivisible; but they somehow experience their separation from the unity, lose their sense of unity. The examples given of this relation are that of the sun and his rays, and the thing and the atoms (*paramanavah*) that compose it.<sup>10</sup> But still the identity between the whole and parts is due to their common nature (*jati*); and they differ as individuals. The followers of this school maintain absolute duality, though it is difficult to defend it logically in view of the fact that the individuals are treated as the Sakti of the Brahman, which is, again, said to be indivisible. Even in the case of the lowest kind of whole like a heap of stones, it is difficult to maintain that any stone which is a part of that heap is individually different from the

heap. But Jivagosvami, Baladeva, etc., hold that the Brahman is an indivisible unity, and it is therefore all the more difficult to understand how a part of it, if it can have a part at all, can be individually different from it. Indeed they admit the incomprehensibility by calling the Sakti concerned *achintya* or incomprehensible. But a single incomprehensible and therefore a mysterious Sakti can be made to account for much more; and there is no need of postulating so many Saktis. For even a conscious Sakti, if we are prepared to treat its activity as incomprehensible, can create unconscious matter.

We do see the reason why the school tries to treat the three as distinct. God has to be both the material and the efficient cause of the world, for the Upanishads declare that he is the only reality. But if as a material cause he undergoes *parinama* or transformation, he would be affected by the creation and therefore his Sakti is made to do it. He remains the efficient cause and only controls the activity of the Sakti. But even as an efficient cause he must have some special power or Sakti, which is his own nature (*svarupa*). But now the world consists of both sentient and non-sentient beings, and so the same Sakti could not have created both. Hence we have one Sakti, the Aparasakti, to create sentient beings, and another, Maya, to create insentient things. But the activity of all is unthinkable (*achintya*). Here Sankara would say that to make all these distinctions and yet think of them as *achintya* is needless ado, and that it would do if we have one *achintya* Sakti.

The closeness of the relation between the Brahman and the three Saktis

<sup>8</sup> *Tattvasamdarbha* p. 147.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 146.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 124.

varies in the three cases. The relation between the Brahman and Parasakti is the closest. It is understood in terms of the relation between fire and heat. That between Brahman and Yogamaya comes next, and is understood as that between whole and parts or the sun and his rays. That between Brahman and Maya comes last. There is something common between Brahman and

the previous two Saktis. But between it and Maya there is very little in common. One is conscious and the other is insentient. There is as much difference between the two as between light and darkness. But still Maya is said to be a Sakti or power of Brahman and to be attached to it. This school is not in favour of treating the world as the body of Brahman.

## THE PARAMAHAMSA AS THE SWAMI SAW HIM

Sri Ramakrishna was the son of a very orthodox Brahmin, who would refuse even a gift from any but a special caste of Brahmans; neither might he work, nor even be a priest in a temple, nor sell books nor serve anyone. He could only have "what fell from the skies" (alms) and even then it must not come through a 'fallen' Brahmin.....Owing to the extreme poverty of his family, Sri Ramakrishna was obliged to become in his boyhood a priest in a temple dedicated to Divine Mother, also called *Prakriti* or *Kali*, represented by a female figure standing with feet on a male figure, indicating that until Maya lifts, we can know nothing.....The daily service of the Mother Kali gradually awakened such intense devotion in the heart of the young priest that he could no longer carry on the regular temple worship. So he abandoned his duties and retired to a small woodland in the temple compound, where he gave himself up entirely to meditation. These woods were on the bank of the river Ganges, and one day the swift current bore to his very feet just the necessary materials to build him a little hut. In this hut he stayed

and wept and prayed, taking no thought for the care of his body or for aught except his Divine Mother. A relative fed him once a day and watched over him. Later came a lady Sannyasin or ascetic, to help him find his 'Mother'. Whatever teachers he needed came to him unsought; from every sect some holy saint would come and offer to teach him, and to each he listened eagerly. But he worshipped only Mother; all to him was Mother.

Ramakrishna came to teach the religion of today, constructive, not destructive. He had to go afresh to Nature to ask for facts, and he got scientific religion, which never says 'believe', but 'see', 'I see, and you too can see'. Use the same means and you will reach the same vision. God will come to everyone; harmony is within the reach of all. Sri Ramakrishna's teachings are the 'gist of Hinduism'; they were not peculiar to him. Nor did he claim that they were; he cared naught for name or fame.

He began to preach when he was about forty; but he never went out to do it. He waited for those who wanted his teachings to come to him.

In accordance with Hindu custom, he was married by his parents in early youth to a little girl of five, who remained at home with her family in a distant village, unconscious of the great struggle through which her young husband was passing. When she reached maturity, he was already deeply absorbed in religious devotion. She travelled on foot from her home to the temple at Dakshineswar where he was then living, and as soon as she saw him she recognized what he was, for she herself was a great soul, pure and holy, who only desired to help his work, never to drag him down to the level of the *grihastha* (householder). Sri Ramakrishna is worshipped in India as one of the great Incarnations, and his birthday is celebrated there as a religious festival.

The life of Sri Ramakrishna is interesting, as it was a living illustration of the ideas that he preached. Perhaps, it will be little romantic for those who live in the West in an atmosphere entirely different from that of India. For the methods and manners in the busy rush of life in the West vary entirely from those of India. Yet perhaps it will be of all the more interest for that, because it will bring into a newer light things about which many have already heard.

It was while reforms of various kinds were being inaugurated in India, that a child was born of poor Brahman parents on the eighteenth of February, 1836 in one of the remote villages of Bengal. The father and mother were very orthodox people. The life of a really orthodox Brahman is one of continuous renunciation..... The mother of Sri Ramakrishna was the very type of a Hindu mother..... Those who are acquainted with the literature of India will remember a

beautiful old story about extreme charity, how a whole family, as related in the Mahabharata, starved themselves to death and gave their last meal to a beggar. This is not an exaggeration, for such things still happen. The character of the father and the mother of my Master was very much like that. Very poor they were, and yet many a time the mother would starve herself a whole day to help a poor man. Of them this child was born and he was a peculiar child from very boyhood. He remembered his past from his birth, and was conscious for what purpose he came into the world, and every power was devoted to the fulfilment of that purpose.

While he was quite young his father died and the boy was sent to school. A Brahman's boy must go to school; the caste restricts him to a learned profession only.....The teachers used to take students without charge, and not only so, most of them gave their students food and clothes. To support these teachers the wealthy families on certain occasions, such as a marriage festival, or at the ceremonies for the dead, made gifts to them. So whenever there is a marriage, especially in a rich family these professors are invited, and they attend and discuss various subjects. This boy went to one of these gatherings of professors, and the professors were discussing various topics, such as logic or astronomy, subjects much beyond his age. The boy was peculiar, as I have said, and he gathered this moral out of it,—that this is the outcome of all their knowledge. Why are they fighting so hard? It is simply for money; the man who can show the highest learning here will get the best pair of cloth. And that is all these

people are struggling for. I will not go to school any more; and he did not; that was the end of his going to school. But this boy had an elder brother, a learned professor, who took him to Calcutta, however, to study with him. After a short time the boy became fully convinced that the aim of all secular learning was mere

material advancement, and nothing more, and he resolved to give up study and devote himself solely to the pursuit of spiritual knowledge. The father being dead, the family was very poor, and this boy had to make his own living. He went to a place near Calcutta and became a temple priest.

## ACHARYA SANKARA AND MEISTER ECKHART

*By Swami Jagadiswarananda*

### II

Eckhart like his Indian rival was a very bold metaphysician. In accordance with his doctrine God is also a becoming. And as all becoming is unreal, so is God, an appearance. As for Sankara *Brahmabhava* was *mokshah* i.e., salvation consists in becoming Brahman, and the knower of Brahman enters into the All, so for Eckhart *Homo nobilis* (deified man, the knower of Godhead) 'becomes all things'. In Vedanta Brahmi Prajna or Brahmabodhi passes all comprehension and disclaims all thought and expression. In Eckhartean mysticism, superconceptual apperception of Godhead is 'unknowing knowing', a contentless consciousness. It is as difficult to plumb as the mighty ocean. It escapes all definition. So the seer becomes silent.

'Both Sankara and Eckhart' remarks Rudolf Otto in his *Mysticism: East and West* (p. 29) 'are teachers of salvation—in that lies their most fundamental point of agreement. But further congruity between these two masters of the East and of the West is found in the fact that for both the way to salvation is knowledge. Both the masters teach that absolute unity with the Divine is salvation. Eckhart's *methodus mysti-*

*cism* resembles to a great extent the Vedantic *sadhana* of self-analysis and understanding the Mahavakyas. The Bhakti School of India has ample affinity with the emotional element in western mysticism. Both the teachers, however, have not preached it as the way to enlightenment. So knowledge for them is not a matter of having visions as in the Bhakti Marga, but it is a spontaneous awareness of identity with Brahman or Godhead, a dawning of *intuitus* (insight) which cannot be produced or worked out. 'This intuitive knowledge is timeless, spaceless, without any here or now' says Eckhart. Knowing is being to both masters.

The super-consciousness that Godhead is one's own Being dawns like a blinding flash of lightning. Augustine rightly observes: 'In this first flash when thou art as if struck by lightning, when thou hearest inwardly the affirmation 'Truth' there remain if thou canst.' The search for salvation is ingrained in human nature. The thirst of the soul for immortality cannot be destroyed by any means. The deep below calls for the deep above, because both are essentially one. The inner nature of the individual being

infinite, no man can get final satisfaction till he becomes the Infinite. One realises his real nature in mystical experience. 'It is', Eckhart says, 'as when a man pours out into a clean vessel and lets it stand and then if he holds his face over it, he sees his face at the bottom resplendent as it is in itself. In that state the essence of all creatures is seen as one in a miraculous nature. There all is one and one all in all. When the soul is wholly united with God and baptized in the divine nature, it loses all hindrance, sicknesses and inconsistency and is at once renewed in a divine life'. Plotinus, another great mystic, whose philosophy again is very akin to Vedanta describes in his '*Enneads*' this knowledge as follows : 'Often when I awake from the slumber of the body and come to myself, I behold a wonderful beauty. Most glorious life works strongly in me and I am become one with the Godhead. Then I see all not in the process of becoming but in Being. Each Being contains within itself the whole intelligible world. Therefore all is everywhere. Each is there all and all is each. Man as now ceases to be an individual and penetrates the whole world. There each is the whole and is wholly all.'

Eckhart opines that the element of unity that is intuited in mystical experience is like the pennon of a submerged submarine pointing to something deeper which it indicates but does not fully reveal. This intuition of unity indicates that macrocosm lies in the microcosm. The two Muslim mystics, Jallaluddin Rumi and Hossain Mansur Hallaj whose teachings have close correspondence with Vedanta speak in the same strain about this mystical intuition in which they say that the

perceiver and the perceived are no longer two things separate from one another, and that the object loses its identity in the subject. There the one is seen as Many and Many as the changing modes of the one. Hanuman in the *Ramayana* and Prahlad in the *Vishnu Purana* assert that there are three stages in spiritual evolution : when body idea dominates the mind, God and soul are perceived as two separate entities ; when Jiva-buddhi prevails, soul is experienced as a part and parcel of God and when Atma-consciousness is attained man realises his inner identity with God. Closely akin to this is the following saying of Eckhart : 'Does the soul know God (Oneness) in the creatures, that is merely evening light (first stage). Does she know the creatures in God, that is morning light (second stage). But does she know God as He who alone is Being ; that is the light of midday (last stage). Christ beautifully expressed the third stage, when he said 'I and my father are one'. Parmenides also voiced clearly the three steps of spiritual evolution and distinguished between first, the Absolute one, second the manifold one, and third the one and the Many.

Sankara and Eckhart do not explain the world ; rather they explain it away. Their compelling interest does not lie in the scientific or philosophical explanation of phenomena but in the idea of *Salus*, of salvation, of *Sreyas*, of *Heil*, and of how this is to be won. To them that the soul is eternally one with the Eternal is not a scientifically interesting statement, but is a fact upon which the salvation of the soul depends. Weighty utterances of Eckhart are really exhortations to the soul to be up and doing in order to attain liberation in this very life. The

German seer observes like Sankara that as long as one beholds differences, *nama-rupa*, the will-o-the-wisp of becoming, one is in misery. 'Even though one beholds an angel, or himself as something formed however divine, so long is there imperfection in him. But as soon as the soul casts off all forms, all shadow of multiplicity (*nanatva*), even in thought or in name, she becomes blessed and attains perpetual peace. The knowledge of the manifold in us obscures the knowledge of one that is in us. *Atma-Jnana* or *Brahma-Jnana* which is eternal, self-evident and unprovable according to Sankara is called by Eckhart absolute knowledge and by Augustine 'eternal truth of soul'. The disappearance of the sense of otherness is followed simultaneously with the unfoldment of knowledge which is beautifully described by Jallaluddin Rumi in this ecstatic verse as follows:

I am the dust in the sunlight, I am  
the ball of the sun,  
To the dust I say : Remain. And  
to the sun, roll on.  
I am the mist of morning. I am the  
breath of even,  
I am the rustling of the grove, the  
surging wave of the sea.  
I am the mast, the rudder, the  
steerman and the ship,  
I am the coral reef, upon which it  
founders.  
I am the breath of the flute, the  
spirit of man,  
I am the chain of being, I am the  
soul in all.

The same feeling is expressed by St. Francis in his song of the Brother Sun. All mystics testify that in ecstasy the soul expands to the Infinite and becomes immersed in It. As discovery of Brahman in the abyssus, the depths of one's self is the

central theme of Sankara Vedanta, so the canticle of the soul as the *homo nobilis* is the core and pivot of Eckhart's teaching. The wisdom of both is first and foremost Atma-bodhi or self-knowledge. With Eckhart the soul, *Das Gamute*, the inner citadel, the inextinguishable spark is the subject of all his teaching. As to Sankara, soul is ineffable like God and is ultimately nothing but Universal soul or oversoul, so to Eckhart, 'Godhead is inexpressible and has no name. At bottom, the soul is also inexpressible as Godhead is'. In the view of Sankara, when soul is stripped of all limitations (*upadhis*), it shines forth in its own light as pure consciousness, and it attains nothing above himself and is united with nothing besides himself, so in the doctrine of Eckhart when the soul puts off all accoutrements it stands in full glory as the *homo nobilis* more wonderful than seraphim or cherubim exalted above all creatures. The soul has this glory eternally within itself which only needs to be set at liberty.

There is another point of resemblance between Sankara and Eckhart. As with the latter the *creare*, so with the former the *Maya*. To Eckhart, the empirical world is a copy, an expression of God in space and time, though the copy is infinitely diminished and falling far short of its original. The empirical Universe, *Prapancha*, exists and shines through Him alone. It is 'pure nothing, a withered grass, a faded flower, a passing shadow, a vanishing cloud, a dying breath, a flying dust, a fleeting dream'. Eckhart develops his doctrine of *creare* and thereby approaches within a hair-breadth of Sankara's *Mayavada*. Like Sankara's *Avidya*, Eckhart's *creatura* cannot be defined as Being or as not-Being. He however clearly says how

creatureliness is to be overcome. 'Where the creature ends, God begins' says Eckhart. Both are equally unable to explain the how and the why of this theory of non-being or cosmic mistake. This problem remains insoluble almost in all religions. The Christians also do not know where the devil comes from. Eckhart finally says 'All things in their finite form have flowed out in time but have nevertheless in their infinite form remained in eternity'. Rudolf Otto, the famous interpreter of Eckhart develops this Eckhartean doctrine fully in his *Vishnu Narayan and Religious Essays*.

Sankara and Eckhart are at one in this, that they are bold to the highest degree; so daring that their temerity cannot be surpassed. Both advocate transcendentalism, yet at the same time they are sincere theists. Their mysticism though deep-rooted in theism, soars very high in the seventh heaven of absolutism. Their mysticism beautifully harmonises theism and transcendentalism. Sri Ramakrishna has verified in his own life that God is at once personal, immanent and transcendent. Sankara and Eckhart maintain that spiritual experience begins with union with God, and ends in unity with God. Eckhart says: 'God made all things through me. I have eternally existed in God, I with Him laid the foundation of the world. I was, before God was begotten out of Godhead'. Is Eckhartean mysticism an accident in the history of western mysticism? To say so is to deny the souls' thirst for the Infinite. Eckhart boldly said that his mysticism is the genuine fulfilment of all theism. He was in the same boat with Sankara, Plotinus, Jalaluddin, Laotze, Mansur and other greatest mystics. His

doctrine is not a historical chance but an inner necessity of the soul. As a theist, Eckhart has a message of hope for all wordlings. He says 'The human soul may be fully turned towards God. An ideal theist according to him 'seeks nothing but God, nothing appears to him but God. He becomes one with God in every thought, all doings and dealings'. Eckhart in his speculation attempts to free God as far as possible from all anthropomorphic elements and inspires orthodox theology to think of God in terms of the Absolute. He thus widens the sphere of theology and makes it merge in mysticism. This is essential to theology, as without this it remains isolated if not segregated! Eckhart is very fond of super-personal Godhead above evolution and devolution.

Eckhartian doctrines have inaugurated a mighty reform movement in western mysticism. It gives an agreeable impetus to theism when it insists that we must also leave God and climb beyond God, that God disappears and enters into modeless Godhead. Eckhart and Sankara expounded a philosophy which is born of and based on mystical intuition and not on intellect whose flight after all is not very far. Eckhart was a monk of burning renunciation and thirsted for the highest experience of spiritual life. He teaches that soul must leave all sense-objects, resolve itself from all attachments, lose all creatureliness, give up all fleshly desires and enter into the stillness of the Godhead and regain its God-nature which it was before all time. He emphasised that the soul must get rid of this *Fata morgana*, this cosmic mistake, this world of wandering and be re-established in his real nature where no sorrow would pain him and which

is the highest gain of life.' The German Rishi stresses that life must be a passionate search for salvation, a quest for eternity, a volcano of homesickness, a thirst for the cessation of *samsara*. Eckhart says that God is righteousness and if one wants to be righteous he must be God. He says 'God Himself knows and loves himself in us. Godhead became God in me'. 'God became man in order that man may become God'. When a man realises his God-nature he wins the right to say all has become God. 'All things are God to him', says Eckhart 'because in all things thou seest nothing but pure God. Like one who looks long into the sun, what he afterwards may see, is seen full of the sun.' Man is seen by both Eckhart and Sankara in two aspects: man in his temporal aspect is a creature of time and becoming, or in the phrase of Kant *homo sub specie temporis*. Man in his eternal nature, reiterates Eckhart is pure Intelligence as is Godhead. Does not this message of the German Acharya sound like a sentence of Sankara who says that Jiva is none other than Brahman.

Thus we see that many doctrines of Sankara have, point for point, their parallels in Eckhart extending even to a surprising identity of phrase. This proves beyond all doubt that Advaita is inherent in all schools of mysticism but all mystics are not so bold as Eckhart whose fundamental teaching is that man must 'get rid of God, must put off God, must know nothing of God'. In an ecstatic mood the German Advaitist proclaims,

'were I not, neither God will be', 'God must disbecome'.

'I was before God came out of Godhead'. Such a doctrine was therefore stigmatised as heresy and the sage was tried before a tribunal of Inquisition. In fact, inspite of Europe's boasting of freedom, there was no freedom of thought in the medieval age. Mystics dared not think in the light of Eckhart for fear of Inquisition.

As Eckhart from a spiritual stand-point is a rival of Sankara, so is Kant the nearest approach to the Indian Acharya from the philosophical viewpoint. Even in the philosophy of Fichte, there exists astounding similarity with the doctrine of Advaita. Fichte in his *A Guide to the Blessed Life* gives a definition of Being which is exactly similar to the Vedantic conception of Brahman. Convergence of thought and experience is conspicuous. Anquetil du Perron had taken the Upanishads to the west through the medium of a Persian translation. Schopenhauer was profoundly influenced by the Upanishads. Schelling knew them and spoke highly of them. In fact, German thought is full of Advaitic elements. Mahayana Buddhism of the Far East is another parallel development of the Advaita. The Chinese sage, Laotze, in his masterly work *Tah Tet King*, teaches the doctrines which are astonishingly identical with Vedanta. It is high time that as learning advances, a comparative study of Plotinus, Eckhart, Sankara, Laotze, Jallaluddin and other Advaitist sages should be taken up and be made available to the students of Comparative Religion.

## SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

*By M. Kalidasu, B.A., B.L.*

It was in the latter half of the nineteenth century that Europe witnessed the majestic march of science at a bewildering pace. In the field of light, electricity and magnetism, physical science made notable advances. Darwin's doctrine of evolution, after overcoming the first bewildered rush of opposition, became established, as a law of Biological science, and later on, its widespread implications commenced to shed light on other fields of knowledge. Glimpses of the subatomic structure of matter began to force themselves on the attention of scientists. The beginnings of radio-activity, of wireless transmission, of the multiple ways in which electrical energy can be harnessed to the practical needs of life, of the wave cum corpuscular nature of light, etc., were witnessed. The amenities of life grew apace under the impact of scientific development. Man, under the circumstances, felt that he had justification for regarding himself as the architect of his terrestrial existence and for disregarding, if not disdaining, the idea of extra means or supernatural intervention in the affairs of life.

It is not therefore surprising that scientists like Huxley and Ingersoll and thinkers like Spencer, openly doubted the validity of religious belief and philosophical speculation. In their books and utterances, there was an amount of atheistic or agnostic dogmatism against which divines and laymen could only feebly protest. It looked as if men could stick on to their religious beliefs or convictions only by shutting their eyes, ostrich-like, to the indisputable facts of science.

Man did not abandon religion but it seemed as though it required an apology or a capacity at self-deception for him to retain his religious moorings. Philosophers like Kant, were dismissed as dabblers in airy nothings. Men of religion like Swedenberg and Newman were dubbed as purblind fanatics.

But progress of science in the twentieth century has, undoubtedly worked a perceptible, if a slow, change in this attitude of scientific men. Further research into the structure of matter compelled scientists to realise that the basis of matter is non-material electrons and neutrons constituting electrical charges and nothing else. Einstein's theory of Relativity and Plank's theory of Indeterminism, based as they are on indisputable scientific data tend to establish that the world, once regarded as entirely comprehensible, is at bottom incomprehensible and mysterious. A scientist of the eminence of Eddington states in his Introduction to his lectures on the nature of the Physical Universe that the material table on which he writes is in reality composed of non-material electrical charges and not of matter cognisable by sense organs. The famous astronomer, Jeans, opines that the world processes partake of the nature of abstract mathematics and that a mysterious mathematician is operating the whole cosmic show. In other words, according to Jeans a supreme intelligence guides creation. Sir C. V. Raman recently asserted that any attempt to determine the nature and reality of the physical universe without taking into consideration the contribution

made by the observer in the processes of perception and comprehension is manifestly incomplete. These are all pointers indicating that even scientific thought is more and more approaching the belief and tenets of religion.

In the light of these interesting facts, it is possible to study the relative place of science, philosophy and religion at the present moment. The name by which science was known in early times is significant. The scientists of that age did not claim for science the right to invade the realms of metaphysics and religion. They were content to label science as 'natural philosophy,' or the philosophy of nature. They appear to have been aware that the province of science was to study nature and its phenomena. By all means, let science address itself to the task of the most exhaustive research into nature's processes and enrich life by its discoveries and inventions. The physical world is at once the world and province of science. But, let not science presume to overstep its bounds and assert that it can discover the origin or nature of existence. Let it not presume to lay down the law for such important factors in life as emotions, thoughts, intelligence and life itself. These cannot be ignored or talked out, as they are of greater and more abiding value to man than all the material comforts that science can contribute.

As the poet puts it :

Let knowledge grow from more to  
more

But more of Reverence in us dwell  
Let us clearly recognise with the  
Biblical prophet that knowledge is but  
the beginning of wisdom.

The world of religion is not the same as the world of science, though it may include the latter. Man's contact with and his attitude towards,

God are matters with which religion concerns itself. The physical senses which play such a predominant part in science may serve as secondary aids but have no abiding place in Religion. The realities of Religion are apprehended by intuition and are not cognised by the senses.

The content of religious experience is the realm of spirit where man's soul seeks contact with the oversoul. While science establishes man's intelligent contact and co-operation with the visible world of nature, religion secures his association with and experience of the invisible world of spirit. Self-surrender, humility, devotion and faith are the means which lead man to success in his efforts for religious experience. In science, on the other hand, an attitude of inquiry, of doubt, of self-reliant investigation and of endless probing and experiment constitute the *sine qua non* of achievement. The attitude of science is one of chronic dissatisfaction and unsatiated curiosity, while that of religion is peace and contentment. Science multiplies man's wants and cravings. Religion simplifies and reduces his needs and desires. As Swami Vivekananda put it, science crawls from the circumference to the centre while Religion takes its stand at the centre and commands a view of the entire circle.

And yet the cosmos is an intergrated whole. All existence is one. The visible and the invisible, the known and the unknown, the manifested and the unmanifested, the world of science and the world of religion—all merge in a grand and wonderful unity. There must be a way that leads from the one to the other, a bridge that connects the known with the unknown, a channel through which waters from the unchartered

deep flow into the waters of the known ocean. It is the province of philosophy to trace the path, to bridge the gulf and to explore the channel, so that the opposites may be reconciled, the unknown may be cognised

and the mysterious may be made known. Thus may science, philosophy and religion constitute a grand trilogy and bring out the cadences and harmonies of a full and unified life.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**Gita Explained By Dnyaneshwar Maharaj. TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY MANU SUBEDAR, B.A., B.Sc. (ECON.) LONDON, BARRISTER-AT-LAW, KODAK HOUSE, FORT, BOMBAY. PP. 355. PRICE RS. 5/- PAPER BOUND RS. 4—8—0.**

Goethe said : ' Translators may be compared to busy match-makers who extol the charms of some half-veiled beauty to us as though she were most loveable ; they arouse an irresistible love for the original.' This statement of that great *litterateur* is specially apt in regard to the present book ; for here we do not get a verbatim translation of the original ; nor has it the ease and advantage of a fresh writing lucidly and systematically setting forth the thoughts of the original and boiling down inflated descriptions and repetitions. Hence it starts a desire to long for the original or an ampler rendering of it. But in the absence of such rendering of the original the value of the present work is immense to those who are unable to read in the source book. Its value is best attested to by the fact that the present publication is the second edition of the same work originally published in 1932.

Saint Dnyaneshwar was a spiritual and literary genius and the present work is his *magnum opus* written when he was only yet in his teens. This great work may rightly be said to be the Bible of the Maratti-speaking population. It has influenced the

spiritual and literary tradition of the Maharashtra for about eight centuries. *Jnaneshwari* is a mine of religious and spiritual ideas synthesizing beautifully *jnana* and *bhakti*. In literary embellishment, chiefly consisting of a superabundance of metaphors, similes and allegories it stands on a par with the famous prose romance of Banabhatta ; the quick - moving rhymed verses and the aroma of holiness throughout have imparted to this classic work an unsurpassed charm. It is not possible to reproduce all these excellences in any translation. It must be said to the credit of the present writer that he has made an earnest attempt to make the thought of the work accessible to the English-knowing public. The first edition was priced Rs. 2-8-0. There is almost a doubling of the price in the present edition. A careful revision would have removed the imperfections in the first edition. We heartily congratulate the translator for this very useful publication.

— M. K. M.

**Atmabodha of Sri Sankaracharya, EDITOR : P. N. MENON, B.A., B.L., EDITOR-IN - CHIEF, INDIAN CLASSICS, PALGHAT, MALABAR. PP. 127 + Lxxv.**

Among the shorter manuals that Sri Sankara composed to make the discipline and thought of Advaita Vedanta common knowledge *Atmabodha*, a work of sixty-seven *anushṭup* verses in main, deserves to be counted

among the very front-rank. This tract is equally serviceable to the beginner as well as the advanced student; for the first type of students its brevity, clarity and omission of non-essential details are appealing; and to the second type it serves as a neat and pointed summary of what has been learned in several works. The work has been translated into English more than once; but the present edition has merits which none of them had. The Sanskrit commentary presented here for the first time from the pen of Krishnanandayati is a rare gift to the scholar world. It is simple, elaborate and masterly. The elucidation given therein is very helpful to the student, and the several citations from an array of scriptures would widen and strengthen the knowledge gained from the perusal of the text. That the author of it lived the discipline he discusses and was not a mere dabbler in the subject is evident from the care and ardour with which he deals every verse. The editor has supplied a word by word meaning in English to help the unskilled reader, a faithful translation of the text and elaborate annotations that are at once calculated to give a very clear understanding of the text and a full acquaintance of a detailed outline of Advaitism. The critical introduction discussing the condition of the religion and philosophy prior to Sri Sankara, his life and works and an estimate of his philosophy has added substantially to the usefulness of the work.

In such an able edition of a very useful text with all these aids for understanding and appreciation, the author's attempt to point out the 'demerits' of Sri Sankara's philosophical discipline appears to us inapt and the feeling left at last in

our mind is that of biting stones in the last morsel of a delicious repast. The editor levels the charge that Sankara has more an intellectualistic bias than emotional. In a country where religious emotionalism has sometimes degenerated into erotic symbolism and excessive sectarian fanaticism shutting off the higher spiritual truths from the masses, priority to intellectualism must be always welcomed at least for the benefit it confers by way of checking unbridled emotionalism. Sankara did not write for the radio or daily press and if he was 'not within the easy reach of the ordinary mind' we could consider it only as much a 'demerit' as that of Einstein's theory of Relativity not being easily understandable for the ordinary man in the street. But Sankara's case is quite different; he has written several small handbooks like the present one and a number of sweet hymns to help the less intellectual seekers of Truth.

Now-a-days we hear an endless repetition of the complaint that Sankara considered Karma 'very inferior', and 'merely as a preliminary discipline. It is strange that those who accept or appreciate Sankara's metaphysical position frown at its natural outcome. Anyone who has read such a preliminary work as his *Sadhanapanchaka* beginning with *vedo nityam adhiyatam tad uditam karma su anushthiyatam tenesasya vidhiyatam apachitih* etc., will be convinced that the first thing he prescribes for a *sadhaka* is 'work'. In many places he again and again asserts that without performing unselfish 'work', perhaps for many lives, the mental condition necessary for *jnana* shall never arise and *jnana* will be absolutely impossible. It is also necessary to remember that if the term 'karma' cannot apply to

reflection, enquiry, meditation and austerity, every intellectual profession, i.e., all work except that of masons, sweepers and diggers and the like, will fall out of the scope of Karma. By Karma Sankara meant ritualistic work taught in the Purva-kanda which are of a distracting kind. If one questions why they are not given an equal status with gnosis one may equally ask why the alphabet and the table of addition and subtraction are taught only in the preparatory class and not in the tenth standard. In fact, Sankara never denies useful activity at any stage of life if it is not prompted by ego. Sankara does not prescribe an inane repetition of 'I am Brahman' as a substitute for *bhakti*. The line we have cited above makes it clear. Those who have read his hymns need not be told what a genuine *bhakti* lies behind them. *Svasvarupanu-sandhana* which he styles as *bhakti* is not parroting 'I am Brahman'; it is an unintermittent absorbing meditation of one's true and essential nature which he has told in every page of his writings is Paramatman or Brahman or God of all Vedanta. Because exalted meditation is not fit for the common folk, therefore he has insisted on Panchadevata worship.

Again 'advocacy of Sannyasism' is nothing peculiar to Sankara. The entire range of Hindu religious literature looks upon Sannyasa as the last and highest stage of the development of man's spiritual personality. Certainly 'Sannyasism' which demands a rigorous sublimation of ego, sex, and food instincts cannot have a wide 'attraction to the mass of mankind'. That is exactly the reason why all the great religions have attracted many of the greatest men of each generation to that institution and have

honoured it. Even Ramanuja and Madhva did not disparage Sannyasism. But for this gratuitous catalogue of Sankara's 'demerits' we find the publication a very useful one and we recommend it to all students of Advaitism. We heartily congratulate the author for his noble effort and hope he will bring out more such excellent works.

**Secrets of Spiritual Life Vol. I.**  
BY DR. MOHAN SINGH, M.A., PH. D.  
D., LITT., PUBLISHED BY S. SHER  
SINGH 3/2, KAPURTHALA HOUSE,  
LAHORE. PRICE RS. 2—8—0. PP. 175.

The width of knowledge disclosed in this marvellous revelation is wonderful. A good deal of the book will remain ever obscure for the ordinary reader. Yet it is a unique production for its 'intuitive' flashes synthesizing the various sciences in the light of the most ancient vedic science. Cosmology and psychology, mythology and mathematics, logic and magic, all have contributed to this bouquet of 'intuition', profoundly deep and luxuriantly rich. Mysticism often revels in a supra-rational region where the language of symbols alone has currency. This accounts for the obscurity of mystic thought when expressed in language. But every obscurity does not hold the promise of hidden truths. Language can rend the veil of ignorance as well as cloak it successfully. Granting the difficulty of reducing the supra-logical to the logical, still one cannot see why clarity should be sacrificed even if profundity is the aim. Are they inconsistent or contrary? Thought and expression being the obverse and reverse of a single pattern, obscurity in the one has its roots in the imperfection of the other. The greatest things are the simplest—a statement truer than apparent on the surface.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### CYCLONE RELIEF

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION'S WORK AND APPEAL

The Ramakrishna Mission has been carrying on cyclone relief work since the last week of October, against very great difficulties of supply and transport. The area taken covers 311 villages, in the Khejuri, Nandigram and Contai Thanas of the Midnapur District, the Saugor Thana of 24-Parganas, and the Bhograi Thana of the Balasore District.

In the week-ending on the 14th March our 10 centres distributed, 2016 mds. 2 srs. of rice, 286 mds. 1 sr. of paddy, 29 mds. 14 srs. of dal, 542 pieces of new cloth, 13 shirts and frocks and 49 pieces of chaddar among 55,597 recipients, as well as 6 mds. 19 srs. of flattened rice and 2 mds. 20 srs. of gur, in addition to 237 tins of powdered milk, 21 srs. of sago and barley, and 21 srs. of sugar candy for children and patients.

Our total receipts up to the 21st March are Rs. 3,40,017, and our total expenditure about Rs. 2,26,681, excluding outstanding bills for about Rs. 86,000. We have also received articles worth over Rs. 1,50,000. Our weekly expenditure is roughly Rs. 20,000.

For want of funds, our work in the Balasore District will be closed from April. But with assurance of food-stuffs from the Government, we have decided to continue gratuitous relief in Bengal till alternative means of subsistence are provided for the people. But there are other problems equally important. Since the monsoon is approaching, hut construction, which is as yet untouched, has become an urgent necessity. The supply of

good drinking water is another immediate need. We have already begun re-excavating tanks in certain areas. This work has to be extended. Besides, large numbers of people, devitalised by continued starvation, are falling a prey to epidemic diseases. To combat this, however imperfectly, we have started homoeopathic medical relief in three of our centres in the Khejuri, Nandigram and Saugor Thanas.

We have to take up the above additional activities immediately, in order to save the people from premature death. For this large sums of money are required.

We convey our grateful thanks to the generous donors whose active sympathy has enabled us to carry on our work so far, and we earnestly appeal to the benevolent public to make further sacrifices for thousands of our helpless sisters and brothers, who have been suffering untold miseries. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following address:—The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA  
Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission  
22—3—43.

### NECROLOGY

In the departure of Srimat Swami Srivasananda the Ramakrishna Order and Mission has lost a rare monk and an effective worker. Recently he has been staying at the Belur Math, and in consequence of an attack of pneumonia he had to be entered in the Howrah Hospital. He was seventy.

five, and his body that has been incessantly saddled with onerous duties and given up to dedicated labour in the vineyard of the Lord latterly gave way to the malady suddenly on Friday, 20th February.

Till his last moment on the earth he was in full possession of his senses and his final thoughts were perceptibly centered in the holy trinity adored by him and the Order, namely, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Sri Saradadevi. He breathed his last with gaze fixed on the likenesses of these and with divine names on the lips. The last wish that received faint articulation from him was : No more I want any birth. The Swami received suitable funeral honours at the hands of the monastic brotherhood which he served, on the hallowed grounds washed by the divine Ganges.

Sri M. A. Narayana Iyengar—for that was the name by which the Swami was known before he received his monastic designation from his Guru—belonged to the generation that welcomed Swami Vivekananda to Madras. As a College student he was among the listeners when the Swamiji delivered his stirring Madras lectures. It is reported that while the Swamiji was addressing a large audience on the ‘Future of India’, in the course of which he stressed the mythical nature of Aryan-Dravidian differences in the South, fair and youthful Mr. Iyengar came handy for an illustration. ‘We are so many northern men here, and I ask my European friends to pick out the northern and southern men from this assembly. Thus remarking the Swami pointed to Mr. Iyengar and is said to have observed ‘who can say this fair man is not an Aryan?’

After the completion of University education, Sri M. A. Narayana Iyengar entered service in the Mysore Government; but the inspiration he received from the great Swami in his student days slowly deepened, expanded and transformed his inner man. He spent long recesses with the Holy mother and the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. His zealous co-operation and able support has helped much the establishment and expansion of the various centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in Mysore State.

On retiring from active service in the Government in 1923, as a Commissioner, the necessary culmination of his religious aspirations came, and he took orders being initiated by Srimat Swami Shivanandaji, the then President of the Ramakrishna Order to that station of life. Ever since he dedicated himself entirely to the educational and allied activities of the Order. He has created a Trust out of the funds (over a Lakh of rupees) that has been collected out of his pension for spiritual and religious instruction and training of youths interested in Hindu culture and Ramakrishna-Vivekananada ideals. The scheme has been working for the last few years a Bangalore under the name of Ramakrishna Vedanta College.

It was the anxious and unslacking wish of the Swami to make money and teachers available for such an institution in which a large number of literate boys and youths may find opportunity to shape their character in the moral, spiritual, and national ideals clearly stated and repeatedly emphasized by Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and thereby to contribute something by way of dedication to the reconstruction of the prospective India. May the Master whom he adored and ser-

ved fructify this wish for the good of the many, and may He grant him the immortal peace and bliss of His Eternal Service.

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The 108th Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Math, on the 8th and 14th of March. The 8th instant being the Tithi there was as usual special Puja, Homam and the distribution of Prasadam at the Math.

On Sunday, the 14th instant nearly 5000 Daridranarayanas were fed at the premises of the Ramakrishna Students' Home.

On the same day a public meeting was convened at the Math Hall. After Harikatha Kalakshepam, speeches were delivered in Telugu, Tamil and English on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna by Sri R. Rama-

krishnayya, M.A., Sri Jnanasambandam and Captain Srinivasamurti respectively. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar presided. The Tamil lecturer pointed out how Sri Ramakrishna stands out as the fulfilment of the long line of sages and saints including the Alwars and Nayanmars of medieval India who shed light and lustre on India. Captain Srinivasamurti, the English speaker traced briefly the life of Sri Bhagavan and averred that his life and teachings afforded abiding solace to modern humanity gone mad over things of the world.

The president dwelt on the popular way in which the Master taught, and stressed the great need of taking more and more to his teachings to prove ourselves worthy of his great divine heritage. The function came to a close with a vote of thanks.

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